

# China

T O U R I S M

## LIAONING SPECIAL

- Song of the Seasons
- Around the Liaodong Peninsula
- Historical Western Liaoning
- Jinzhou Pebble Souvenirs



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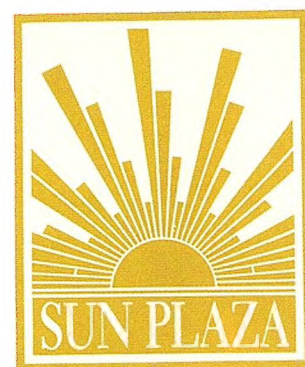




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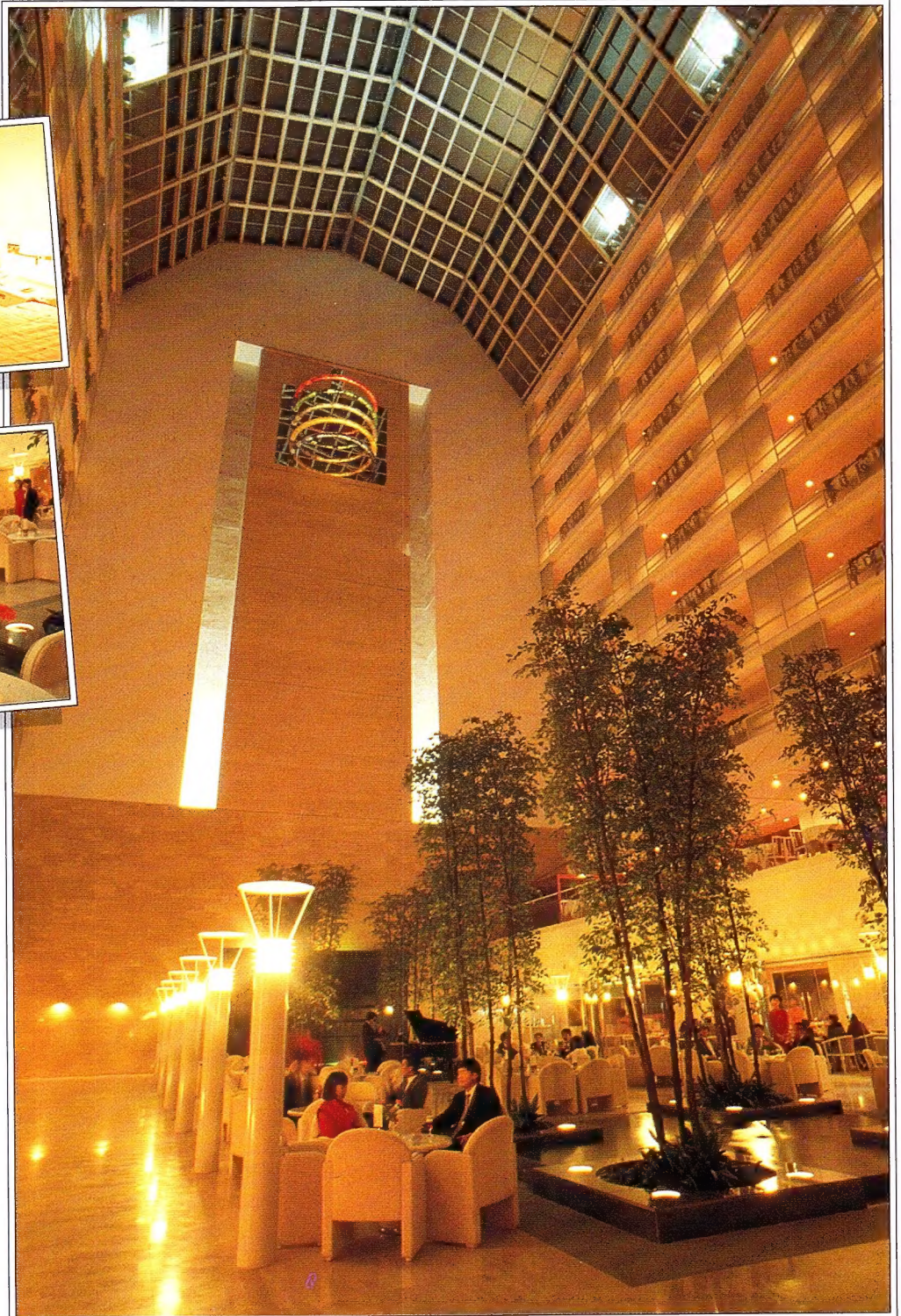
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# EDITORIAL

## Cradle of the Manchus

Visitors wishing to explore China's northeastern province of Liaoning should not be too deterred by tales of snow and ice. The winters are rigorous, it's true, and perhaps not for the general tourist unless he or she is a connoisseur of glacial northern landscapes. But Liaoning, especially in the vicinity of Dalian and around the Liaodong Peninsula which projects south into the Bohai Sea, can offer plenty at other seasons, including the pleasures of its attractive coast and seaside resorts.

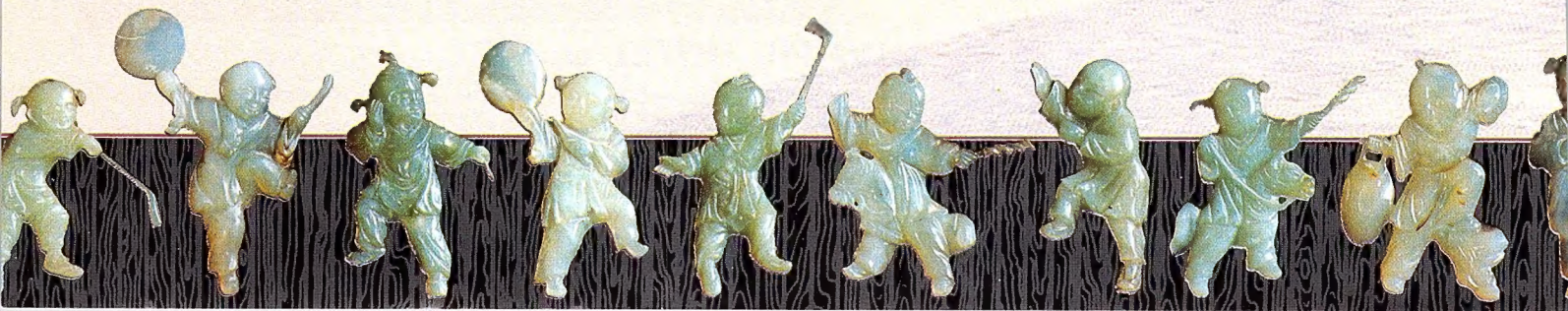
The industrial clout of Liaoning (this is China's richest province in terms of natural resources) in general and the burgeoning economy of the open port city of Dalian in particular should ensure that it receives more and more foreign visitors in future.

This province has seen many battles — clashes between the warlike regimes of the Liao dynasty and the Nüzhen of the Jin dynasty between the tenth and twelfth centuries; recurrent confrontations between Ming forces and the increasingly assertive Nüzhen who became the Manchus, culminating in the overthrow of the Ming and the rise of the Qing dynasty in 1644; upheavals of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The latter are particularly evident at Lüshun (once known to the West as Port Arthur) near Dalian and Dandong, which faces North Korea across the River Yalu.

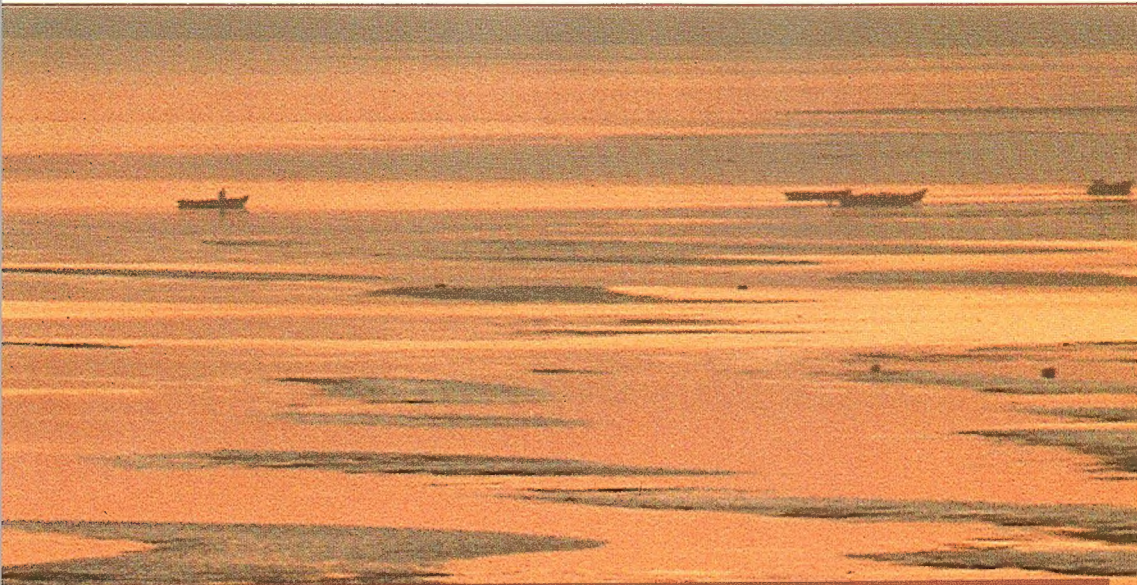
Cultural relics also testify to history. Of particular interest are the recent discoveries of ruins dating from Qin and Han times on the coast not far east of the border with Hebei which are believed to have been temporary palaces for imperial visitors from far to the west in what is now Shaanxi. Another ray of light onto the distant past was provided with the excavation of an altar site and figurines of fertility goddesses dating back 5,000 years, apparently connected with the ancient Hongshan Culture.

In other articles, we take a series of jumps through history. From fifteenth-century Ming times and four distinguished literati painters — Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin and Qiu Ying — of the Wu School we leapfrog to the mid-nineteenth century and that interesting militant movement known as the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom; we examine the elegant architecture of the official residence of Li Shixian, known as Prince Shi, at Jinhua in Zhejiang. Leaping yet again across the years to the present day, we visit Xishuangbanna in southern Yunnan, home of the devoutly Buddhist Dai people, where young boys enter the monastic life as part of their education.

We hope you enjoy this month's mixture of ancient and modern.







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by its fine, meticulous brushwork and light touch which became known as the Wu School.

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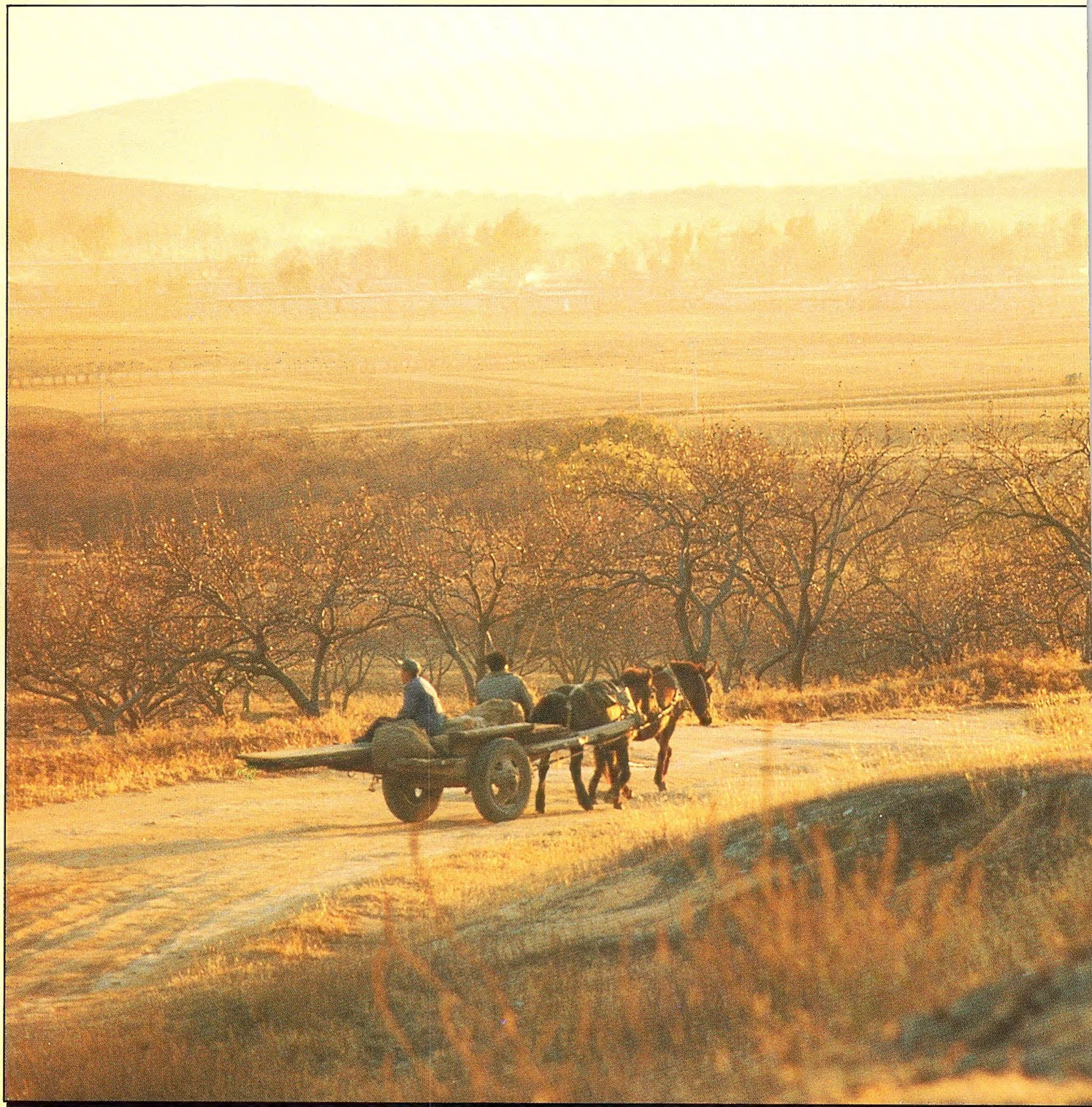
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# Song of the Seasons

TEXT BY YU LAN



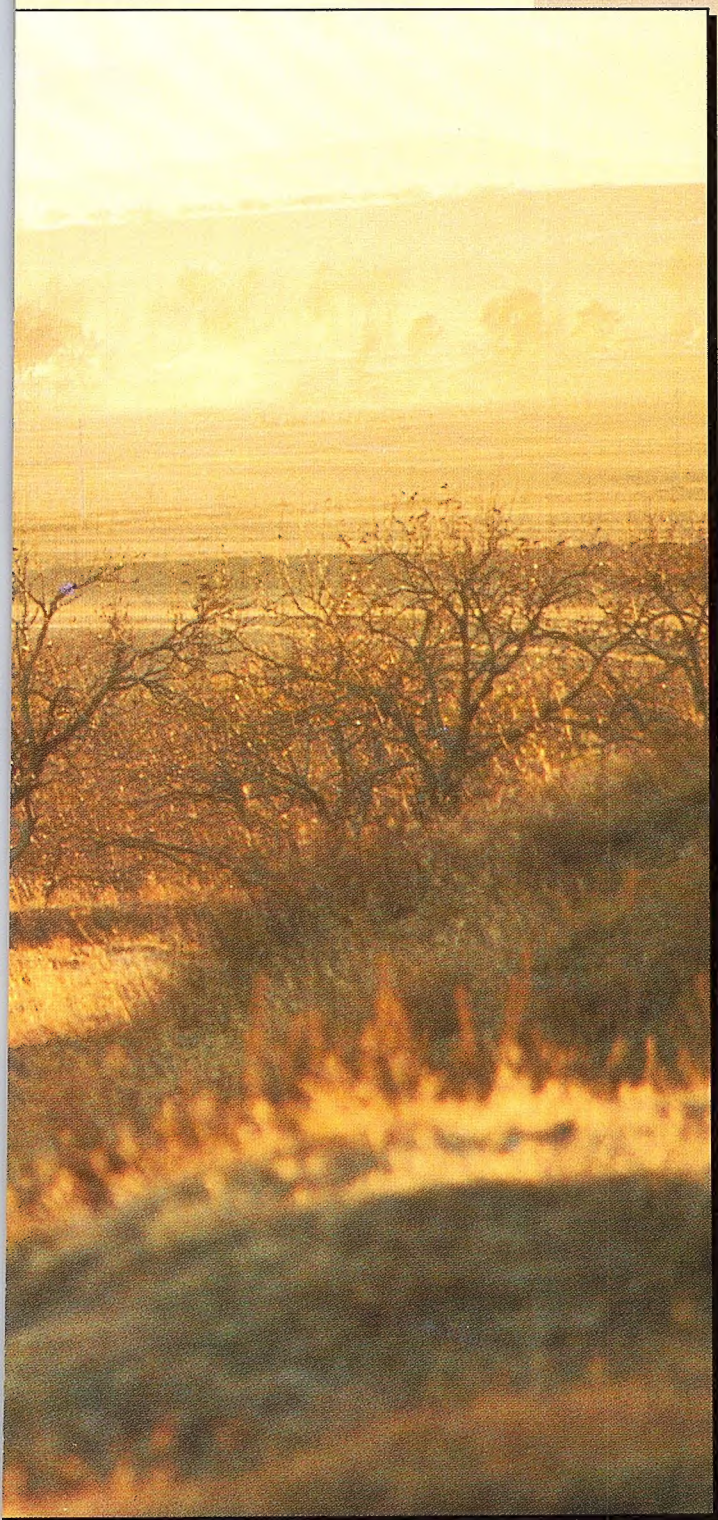


# 秋

In the rich golden light of autumn, progressively sharper winds strip the leaves from the trees. Together with grasses and pine needles and twigs, they are gathered by local farmers to act as fodder for domestic livestock and to heat the household during the coming winter months.

A great number of the trees in Liaoning are fruit trees. In the autumn bulging sacks of apples are carted off to the markets, where they are in great demand. Gaixian County on the west coast of the Liaodong Peninsula, with over forty varieties, is a prime apple-growing area ... and the region around Dalian produces an astonishing 25% of all of China's apples.

(Both photos by Chan Yat Nin)







**W**inter in the south of Liaoning is temperate compared with conditions further north, where the average temperature in Shenyang, the provincial capital, remains well below freezing point. The port of Dalian never freezes over. But it is still bleak, and icy blasts from Siberia may bring abundant snowfall. Caught in a sudden blizzard, walkers try to protect themselves from the worst of the clammy damp as the snowflakes melt.

(Photo by Qi Bu)





Spring comes reluctantly as warmer, humid breezes blow in off the Bohai Sea. The thick ice covering rivers in the hinterland — here the Liaohe — melts only slowly, swelling the sluggish waters. A risky conveyance at best, an ice floe can at a pinch stand in for a boat.

(Photo by Chi Feng)





夏





Summer brings the return of welcome warmth, most of the year's rainfall, a burgeoning of green, and a rash of agricultural activity, especially along the coastal plain. Seed-bearing grasses nod their long heads alongside a river glistening with reflected lights.

Laden with their haul of molluscs, sea urchins and other marine creatures harvested from the rocks at low tide, women make their way back to their village in high spirits. Their catch will go to the speciality restaurants which make Dalian, in particular, a seafood-lover's delight. ☞

(Both photos by Chan Yat Nin)





LIAONING SPECIAL

# Around the Liaodong Peninsula

## Historic, Modern Dalian

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY CHAN YAT NIN





ila

The Liaodong Peninsula, the second largest in China, is situated in the south of Liaoning Province at the easternmost limit of China's coastline where the Bohai Sea meets the Yellow Sea. Its unique natural scenery, its importance in modern history, and its special position as a 'window' on to China's rich northeastern provinces make it a foremost tourist attraction.

My trip to Liaoning started here. It is only about four hours by air non-stop from Hong Kong to Dalian, the major port city at the southern tip of the peninsula which is one of the fourteen coastal cities open to foreign investment.



2



1

**I**t was a cool day at the end of the summer when I arrived in Dalian (Lüda). Tourists were leaving the coastal resorts in droves, abandoning the garden city to its industrious inhabitants and the businessmen who are crowding in in ever increasing numbers to take advantage of its thriving economy and its excellent port facilities.

Strolling in Zhongshan Square that first morning among old Western-style buildings with cupolas and pinnacles, I watched locals at their exercises: *taijiquan* or sword play. Less familiar sights were the knots of people, old and young, dancing to disco music.

Dalian's layout has been carefully planned. There are more than a dozen squares in the city. Streets radiate from them in all directions to interconnect like a gigantic spider's web. The buildings demonstrate the architectural styles of both Eastern and Western Europe: Byzantine, Gothic, Baroque. . . . But you also see signs of Japanese influence. These are all reflections of Dalian's complicated history in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

In between these historic reminders are new, tall buildings, among them a dozen joint-venture hotels. The Hotel Furama is one such. The hotel's lobby is decorated in a quite magnificent manner, but you can feel that the designer wanted to introduce something genuinely Chinese. For instance, there is a mural there with inlaid gold threads depicting an ancient fairy tale, as well as a *padauk* (redwood) carving with thousands of galloping horses.

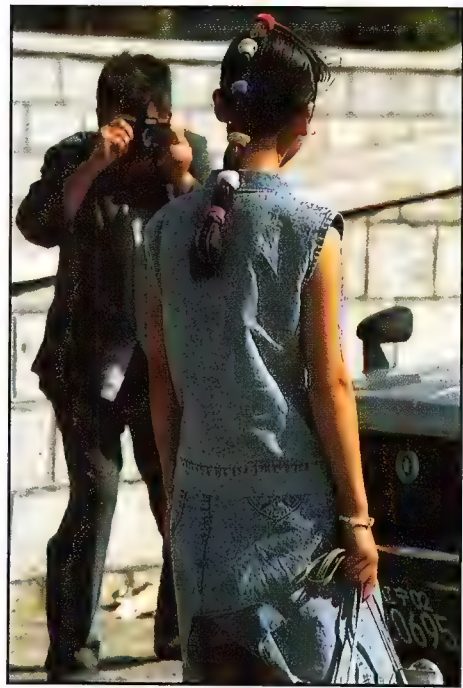
I myself stayed in the Nanshan Guesthouse, peaceful and secluded, consisting of a dozen or so pretty villas nestled in a garden. However, the hotel also boasts bowling, an indoor swimming pool, a sauna and other amenities.

**Modern amenities: shopping arcades at the Friendship Store (1); the swimming pool at the Nanshan Guesthouse (2).**

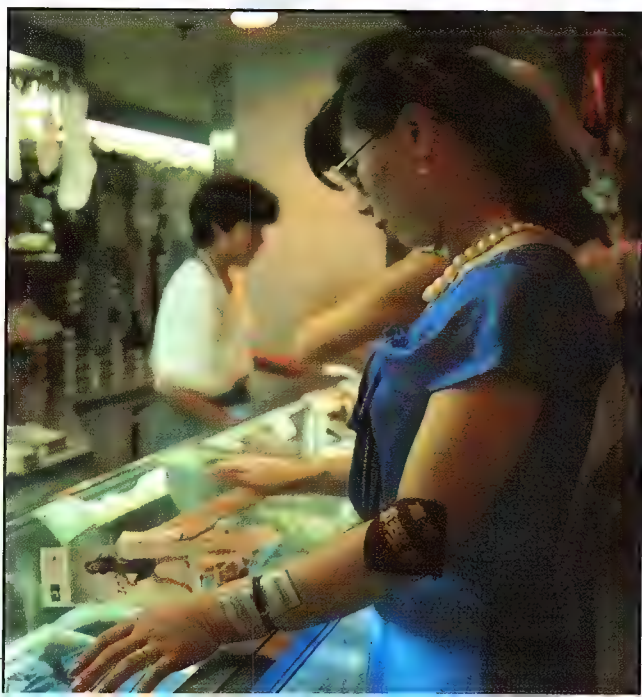




1



2



3







Many foreign businessmen prefer to stay at the Nanshan with their families.

This is certainly a great place for a family holiday as Dalian is surrounded by sea and beaches on three sides although, when I was there, it was already too cold to go into the sea. Twenty-five kilometres along the coast there is an extensive resort area complete with hotel and amusement park. Built by the local fishing community, the complex is known as the Bihai (Blue Sea) Villa. Other popular beaches are at Laohutan, Bangchuidao, Fujiazhuang and Xinghai Park.

Back in the city proper, at dusk, the streets were thronged with gaily dressed people singing and dancing. Dalian's fashion festival had begun! Over the next few days fashion shows were held everywhere. Garment factories, retail stores, even self-employed workers sent teams to join the daily parade, attracting massive local interest. Three times a day invited models from Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai joined their local colleagues on catwalks and improvised platforms in the commercial districts.

Most Dalian people seem to be tall and slim and they are particular about what they wear. Elegant men and women can be seen everywhere in this open, up-to-date city.

Contrasting with Dalian's modern industries are its various traditional markets. The most interesting is the furniture market held along Dagong Street. Every morning private traders bring wardrobes, sofas, tables and chairs to be sold there in the open. This market is said to be one of the busiest places in Dalian year-round.

Translated by Yu Zai Xin

*Aspects of Dalian: the Bihai Villa (2) and its amusement park on the coast (1). A fashion parade (5) sums up the city's relaxed, modern approach to dressing (4). A new-style department store manager (3) and the old furniture market (6, by Zhao Dapeng).*



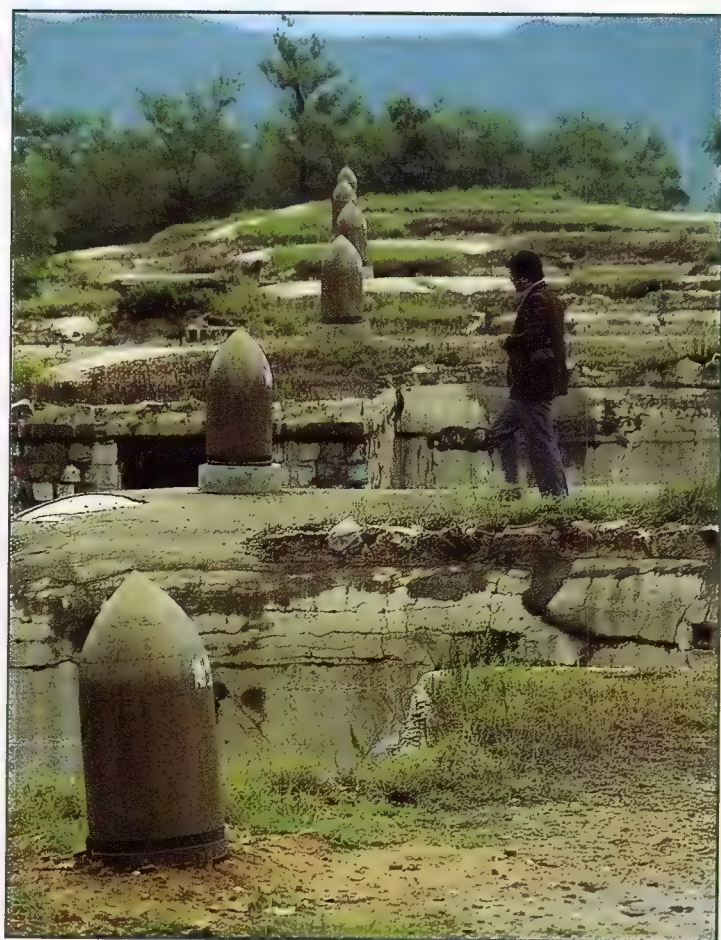
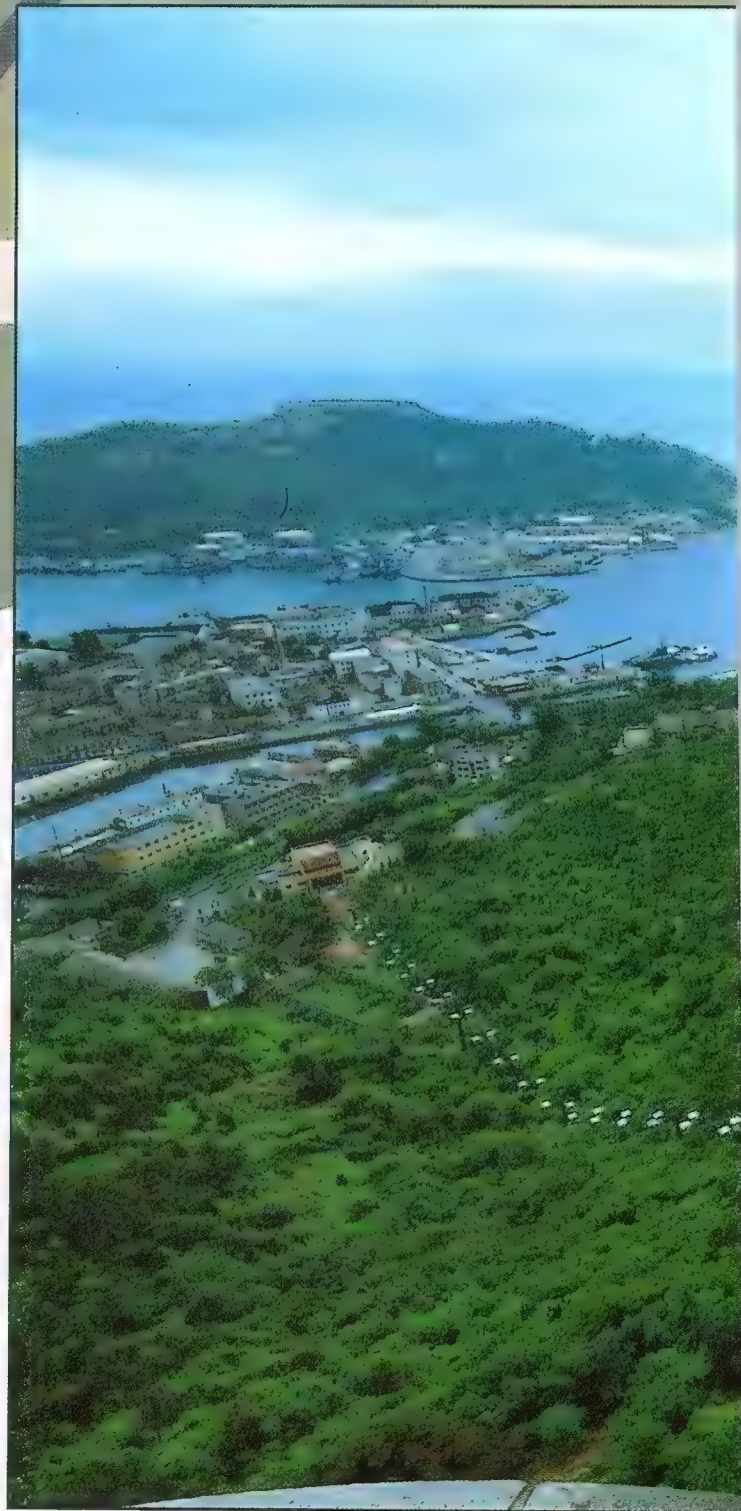


SPECIAL LIAONING

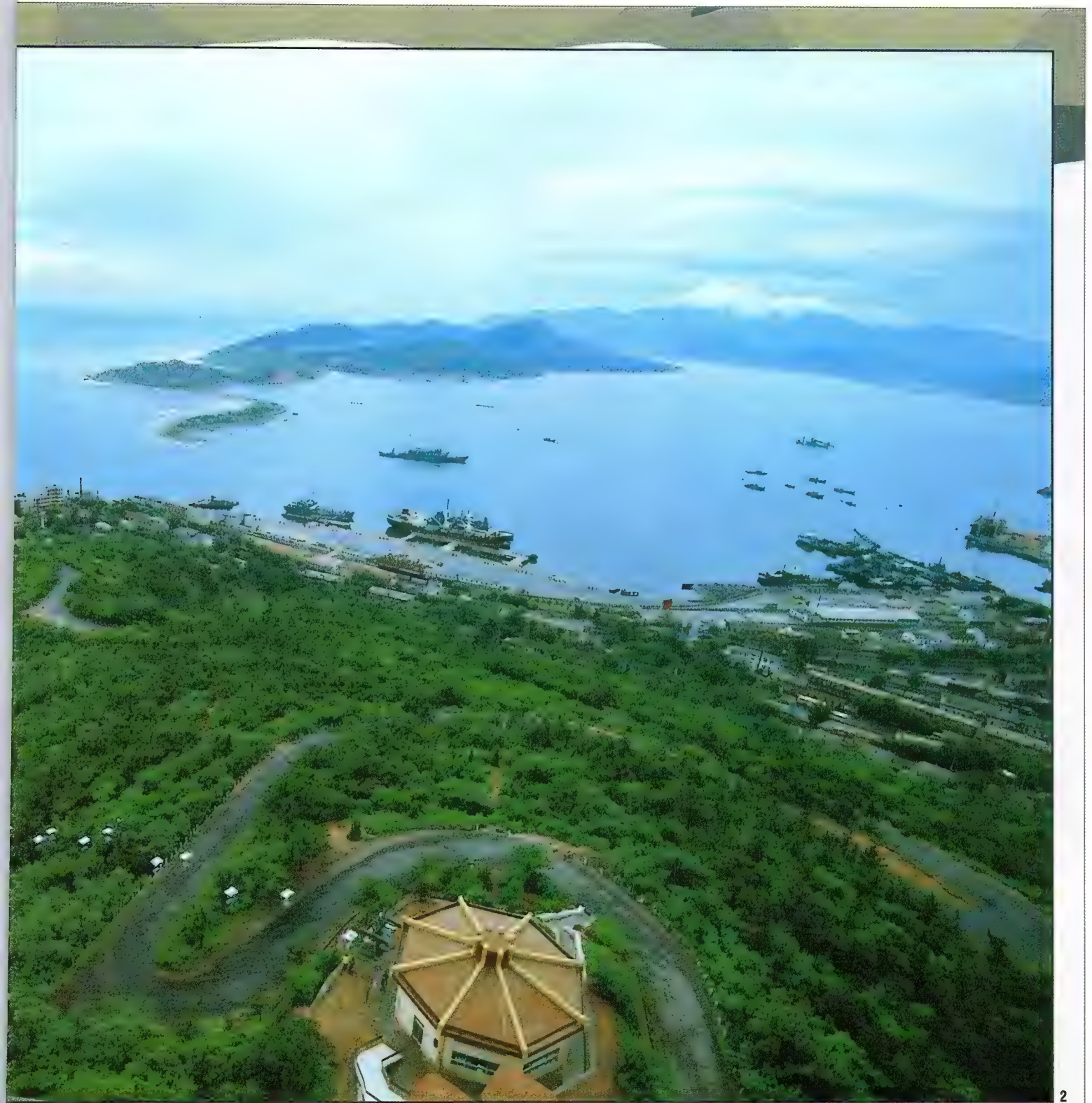
# Strategic Lüshun

PHOTOS BY CHAN YAT NIN

ARTICLE BY HU WANG







2

**M**y next stop was Lüshun sixty kilometres southwest of Dalian. This natural deep-water harbour which never freezes has been one of the most important naval bases in the north since the last years of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Its strategic importance is obvious from a glance at the map: its central position allows it to control both the Yellow Sea and the Bohai Sea, as well as commanding access to Tianjin and thus Beijing.

In order to get a better view, I drove straight to Baiyu (White Jade) Hill which rises 130 metres behind the port. The small hill is topped by a round granite tower 66.8 metres high with

a spiral iron ladder by means of which one reaches a viewing platform. Green hills embrace the placid waters on all sides. A group of islands snakes across the bay in an S-shape, forming a natural breakwater. Hill merges into hill, leaving just a single entrance from the sea. This harbour is indeed easy to defend and difficult to attack.

Behind the tower I found an open-air exhibition of MIGs, tanks, anti-aircraft guns, etc. The traces of war are inescapable in Lüshun.

### **Base of the Qing Northern Fleet**

Towards the end of the Qing dynasty Lüshun

became an important base for the Northern Fleet which was set up by Li Hongzhang, at that time Minister for the Armed Forces. Lüshun was the scene of many battles during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 and later the Russian-Japanese War of 1904-1905.

You can still see fortifications and a huge cannon on Baiyu Hill. However, the cannon is now flanked by wooden cut-outs, one the figure of a northern general, the other an officer of

*The fortifications at Dianyan (1) once guarded the entrance to the naval port at Lüshun (2, by Wang Yi).*





the Qing, for tourists to have amusing photos taken — a true sign of the times!

Down at the port, I went on board a decommissioned old warship which is now just a showpiece for tourists. Surprisingly, all its weaponry is in place; even the machine guns in the bows still swivel round.

### Eerie War Sites

More than eighty years ago, Dongjiguan (East Cockscomb) Hill was one of the main combat sites of the Russian-Japanese War. A fierce battle raged here for more than four months. Most of the Russian fortifications on the hill were levelled by the Japanese artillery but those which did manage to escape destruction now stand witness to the past.

I entered the tunnel-like corridor of one fort. It was deadly quiet. The loopholes projected stray beams of light into the otherwise dim corridor. The atmosphere was frankly eerie.

I could not help noticing something strange about the design of this fort. The loopholes were set, not towards the side from which you would expect an enemy attack, but the opposite side. It seems that the tactic employed was to wait until the enemy forces had penetrated the lines, then open fire from behind. The Russians' final position was on the highest point of Dongjiguan Hill at the Wangtai Battery, where you can still see two fifteen-centimetre shell guns dismantled from a Russian gunboat and hastily set up as a last resort.

### Russian Fort at Dianyan


I continued to Dianyan Fort, a Russian outpost sited on a small hill beside the sea. A series of gun platforms built of large blocks of stone face the sea, forming a powerful line of defence and guarding the entrance to the port.

Up behind there is a larger hill. From the sea, I was told, it looks as though the fort is actually on this second hill. During the Russian-Japanese War, Japanese forces attempting to take Lüshun tried to gain the upper hand by putting the fort's batteries out of operation. What they didn't realize was that the fort was some distance in front of the hill they were shelling so unmercifully! The fort escaped unscathed.

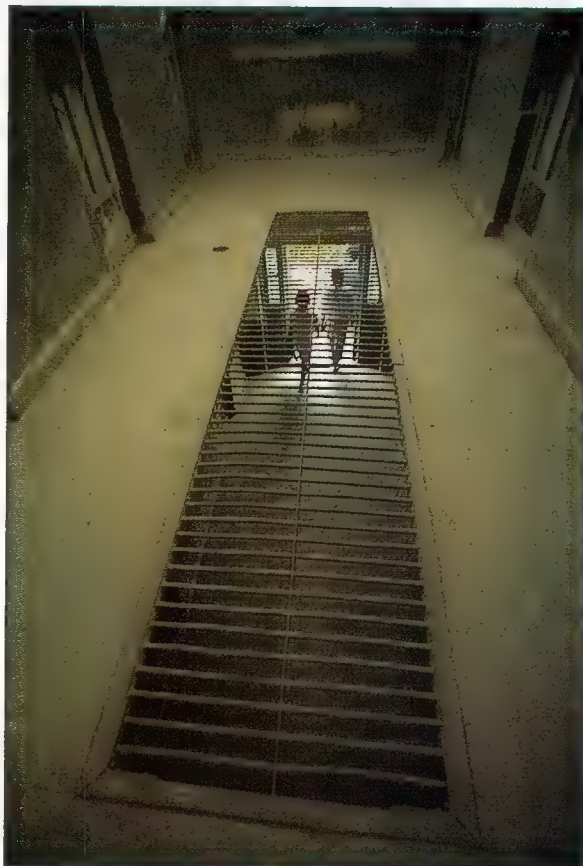
It was not late when I returned to the town, my thoughts still on the vestiges of war, so I decided to round off my tour with a visit to Lüshun's Russian-Japanese Prison. This was first constructed by the Russians in 1902. When they were defeated in their war with the



Japanese fought on Chinese territory, all their facilities — including this prison — were taken over by the Japanese, who extended the prison to its present size. There are said to be altogether 253 cells, torture chambers, interrogation rooms, workshops, etc. The prison covers over 22,600 square metres and was, in its time, the largest prison in China's northeast.

It is now a museum to an unhappy period of the Liaodong Peninsula's recent history.   
Translated by Yu Zai Xin

*Interiors of the Russian fort on Dongjiguan Hill (2, by Lü Guohua) and the Russian-Japanese Prison in Lüshun (3). Even such reminders of war have a lighter side (1).*





LIAONING SPECIAL


# Jinshitan — Golden Pebble Beach

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY CHAN YAT NIN



*Fissured and twisted rock rather resembling an elephant's head*





**T**he Liaodong Peninsula is noted for its lovely seascapes and unique rock formations. These features can be seen to great advantage at Jinshitan (Golden Pebble Beach) sixty-four kilometres along the deeply indented coast east of Dalian. Here the sea has eroded the rocks into the strangest of shapes which, together with their multifarious colours, give the shoreline a somewhat surrealistic look.

### **Tortured Rocks**

At Jinshitan I left my luggage in a hotel — an imaginative structure topped with pinnacles like some fairytale European castle of olden times — and went out to explore. The bay faces the southwest. Towards the east stretches a long pebbly beach, to the west a sandy beach over seven kilometres long, the latter a magnet in season for swimmers and sun-worshippers. I set out towards the east.

The coastal road meanders over two rises before running down to stop beside a cliff below which lies a tortuous maze of rocks and reefs. The dying sun gilded the rocks as the blue of the sea intensified. The play of light accentuated the grotesqueness of some of the shapes. As the twilight spread, the rocks became a mass of silent, sombre, uncanny silhouettes.





A hundred pillars of rock emerged from the sea, all slanting at exactly the same angle. A large rock, something like an elephant's head and trunk, showed intricate stratification. Further away a wall of stone stood upright, its strata twisted into a concertina-like shape which zigzagged down into the ground.... The beach was like this everywhere I looked.

I finally picked my way down the steep cliff. At close hand the strata and veining of the rocks appeared in full diversity. Some of them were so tightly folded they made me think of surf curling to break on the shore; others seemed more like the complex root systems of a tree a thousand years old. These had the appearance of dead wood, but not the texture. Another reef was exposed as the sea receded. Its veins ran in clearly delineated parallel lines like an old-fashioned washboard, in sharp contrast to the twisted nature of its neighbour.

### Museum of Nature

These rocks and reefs twisted, folded and veined in a thousand different ways reflect the mysterious movements of the earth's crust.

During the Precambrian era some six to seven thousand million years ago, the remains of the aquatic plants, insects and creatures which were so plentiful in the region formed a layer of sediment with mud and sand at the bottom of the ocean. Such strata were laid down continually. The same natural forces and stresses which raised the earth above the sea and formed mountain ranges fractured and folded the strata. Repeated convulsive movements of the earth led to a wild mingling of the original layers, creating rocks of differing colours, textures, hardness and porosity.

The rest is due to the action of the sea and its waves, eroding and sculpting rocks over the millennia according to their nature, hollowing out and wearing away the softer layers, sparing and thus accentuating the hardest. This phenomenon is common to most shorelines, but it is rare to find such a conglomeration of rocks and from such a range of geological eras as one finds at Jinshitan.

### Harvest from the Sea

The next morning I rose at six and returned to the eastern shore to view the sunrise. The tide was just going out. As the sea retreated, the beach seemed to become more spacious minute by minute, uncovering a whole new world of seaweed-covered reefs and rocks from below the surface.

Now, in full daylight, I could see how far the beach stretched — a grandiose sight. In shape it was rather like a giant turtle with its head out

*Multifarious examples of erosion and folding (1-3). Low tide brings a burst of activity along the water's edge (4).*

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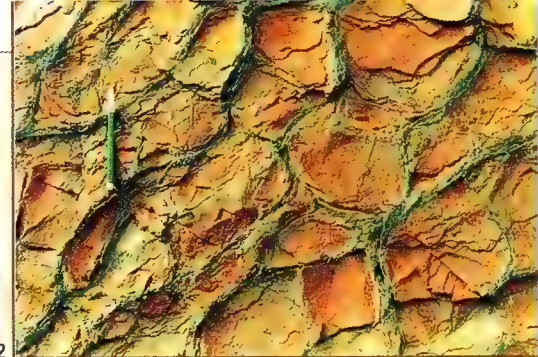
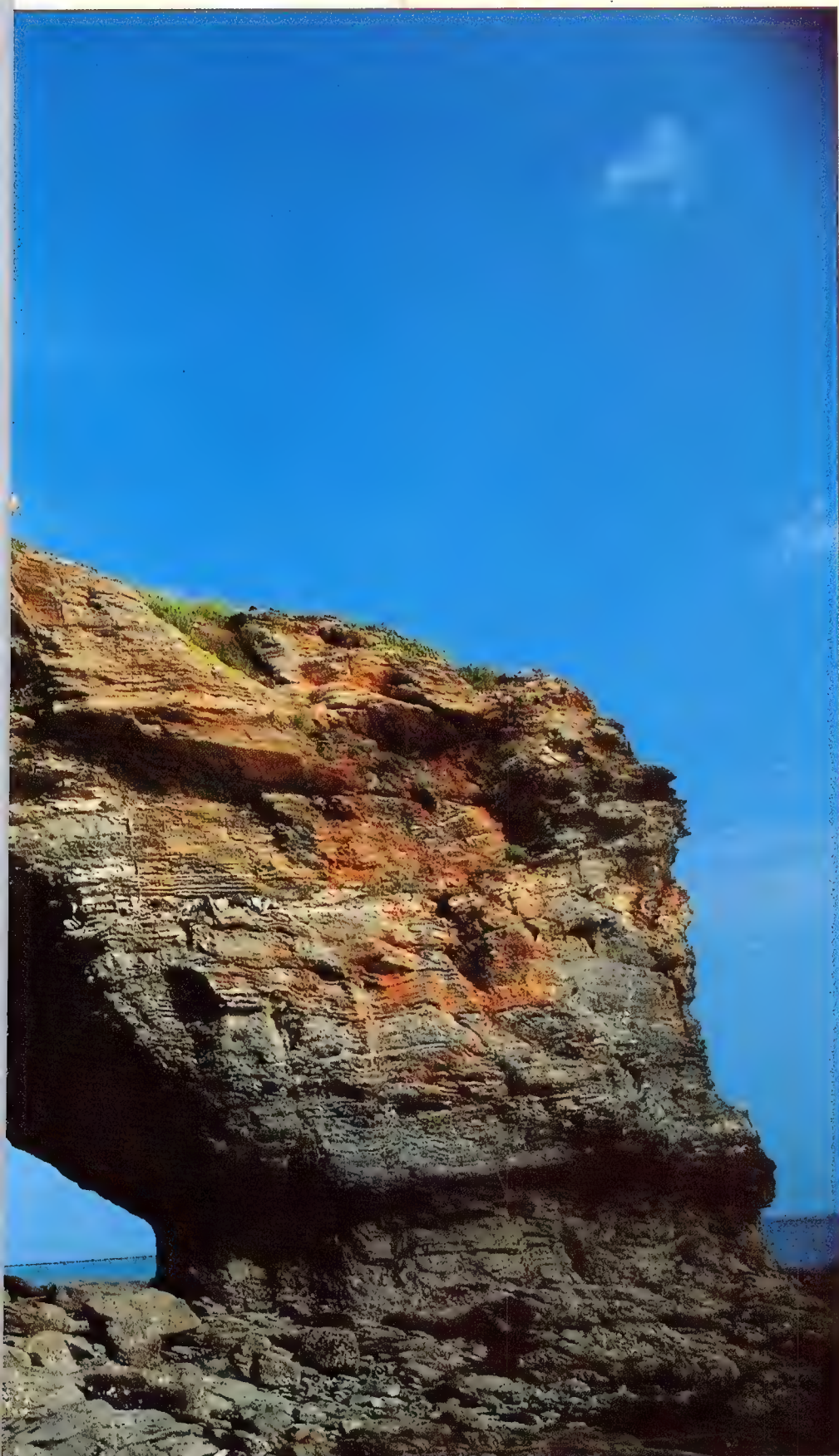
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in the sea; a small island opposite resembled a little turtle looking back over its shoulder, which is why this beach is also called Aotan (Turtle Beach).

In the middle of the sweep of beach a flight of steps led down to the waterline. Local people worked away busily there, taking advantage of low tide to collect the many marine products stranded in the shallows and on the reefs by the receding waters: sea cucumbers, starfish, sea urchins, and innumerable beautifully patterned shells.

Some women, fully clothed, had no hesitation in ducking below the water surface to gather this harvest of riches from the sea. This is no easy way to earn one's living; the water is very cold and low tide may occur at any time of day or night. Still, despite the laborious nature of their work, they were content, since a good haul could bring them in more than one hundred yuan — a handsome sum.

### A Geological Rarity

Joining the women, I started to collect shellfish on the reefs. My bucket was soon full. Wandering along the water's edge like this in a desultory fashion I suddenly found myself alongside a huge rock surrounded by barbed wire at the foot of a cliff. The rock is 'protected' thus as it is said to be a geological rarity.

A sedimentary formation dating from hundreds of millions of years ago, it became deeply cracked under the influence of a dry, hot climate. Then, over the ages, the cracks in their turn became filled with new deposits, creating the variegated texture and strongly contrasting colours — red and green — we see today. The shale here also contains many trilobite fossils.

On my way back from Aotan, I took a footpath along the cliff, sometimes returning to the shore, sometimes picking my way through the rocks. I soon came to another strange and fascinating sight where the softer rock of the cliff has been worn away under the action of the waves to form archways like windows or doors. The most spectacular is the formation known as the 'Dinosaur Looking at the Sea'. It arches out so far and wide that, at high tide, a boat can pass under it and through the 'door'.

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Translated by Yu Zai Xin

*The pierced formation which local people liken to a dinosaur (1) and a rare 'cracked' rock (2, by Pan Risheng).*



# The Tranquil Bingyu Valley

PHOTOS BY CHAN YAT NIN  
ARTICLE BY TIAN CUI



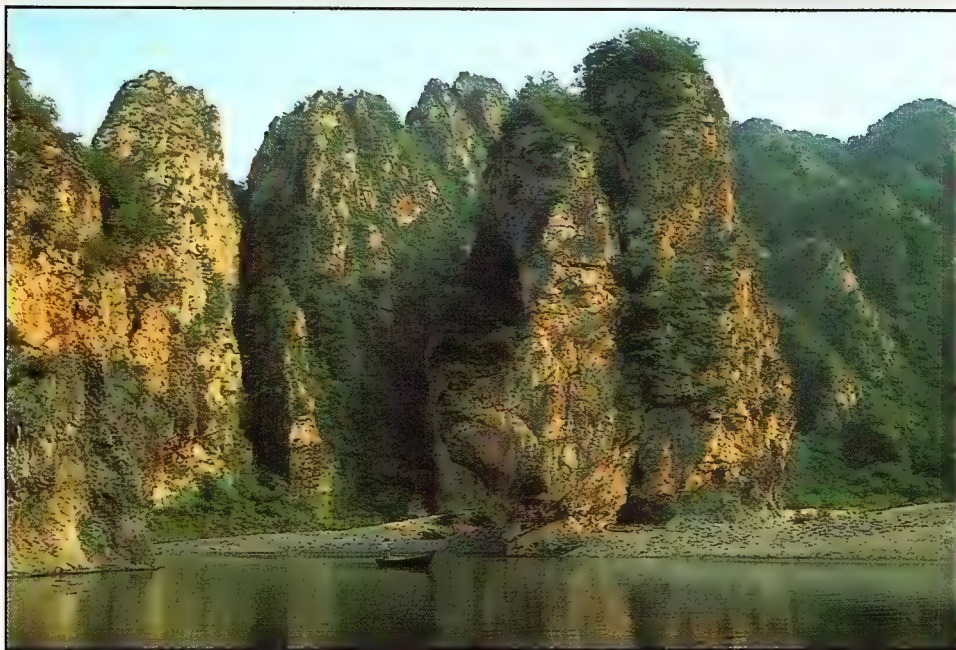
**N**ext, together with friends, I headed for Bingyu (Ice Valley), a scenic spot recently opened to the public in Zhuanghe County, a mountainous area to the northeast of Dalian. Two streams thread through the valley, which is surrounded by mountains on three sides. Our coach passed the Fairy Cave on Longhua Hill. In the distance, row upon row of bamboo-shoot-like hills rose by the streams. At first glance, I thought they looked rather like the karst peaks of Guilin but, once at their foot, I felt that they were too steep, too wild and rough, quite different from the graceful hills in the southwestern beauty spot.

## A Scene of Rustic Beauty

The streams were so limpid and calm that you could see the pebbles on the bottom. The reflection of the hills in the water was vivid. The stream before us was about twenty metres wide, so it took us only a few minutes to get across on a small ferry boat. It was so quiet and still; we hardly saw a soul. Occasionally we caught sight of one or two cottages. Suddenly the water was disturbed, for a farmer was herding some cows and sheep across the stream. A little while later, several horses waded towards us....

As the sun was westering, we approached where we were to camp. The final rays of sun-





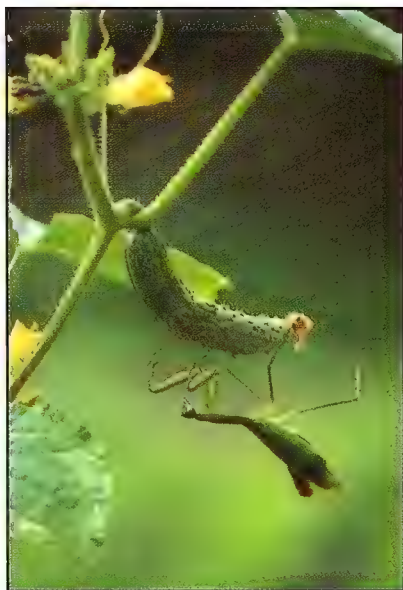
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light turned the water in the stream golden and gave the hilltops a tinge of orange. A few lonely trees on the hills looked almost black against the setting sun. Cogongrass grew tall and sturdy by the stony riverside.

Behind the camp was a row of thatched pavilions. After a simple supper there, we quickly made for the tents where thick mattresses awaited us. It was extremely quiet at night. No flies. No mosquitoes. Even the dogs were silent. All we could hear was the sighing of the wind.

### Wading the Rivulets

We got up early the next morning and set off in high spirits. Since I had made an appointment with a local farmer to have breakfast at his home, we went further into the valley. To get to his place, we had to wade across four rivulets. I thought at first that this would be great fun.



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But when I was actually forced to do it, I wasn't so sure. The water was so swift that it was difficult even to stand still. The pebbles on the bottom were slippery and would certainly hurt my feet. And, of course, if I kept my shoes on, they would be ruined. Seeing my dilemma Old Li, the farmer, took off his own shoes and offered them to me. I was touched by his concern. He told me then that it was a lot easier to travel in this valley in winter, since all the streams would be frozen solid.

Feasting our eyes on the beautiful scenery, we eventually reached a solitary house surrounded by a fence. Beside it was a vegetable plot. In an out-of-the-way place like this, people have to be self-sufficient. Old Li grew cucumbers, gourds, courgettes, pumpkins and so on, as well as chrysanthemums.

The host was very hospitable, as was his dog. They don't see too many visitors. As soon as I entered the house I was greeted by the fragrance of the large pot of corn gruel the farmer's wife had made us. The wonderful smell made my mouth water. I learned that their daughter had waded the four rivulets the previous night to announce our visit to her mother.

The breakfast was rich in variety. Apart from corn gruel, there were corn cakes, salted eggs, boiled eggs and vegetables freshly gathered from the garden. I have to report we ate everything on the table!

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Translated by Wang Mingjie

*Reflections of tranquil beauty (1, 2) on the way to the campsite (4). Welcoming corn gruel (5). Seen in the vegetable plot: cucumber with praying mantis (3).*



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# The Manchus of Xiuyan

ARTICLE BY JUN FENG



**G**rateful for the hospitality we received in the Bingyu Valley, we returned to the town of Zhuanghe, then headed north to the Manchu Autonomous County of Xiuyan.

When one thinks of Manchus, one immediately thinks of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) which they founded on grasping power from the Ming court. But the Manchus did not just fade away on the fall of the Qing dynasty in the early twentieth century. Although they are found all over China, considerable communities — amounting to almost five million people in all — still live in their northeastern heartlands, the present-day provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning. Around half of them now dwell in the latter province.

My first impression of the Manchu people I saw was that they were little different from Han Chinese as regards their dress. They seemed to have no immediately striking ethnic features. But you soon notice that the local architecture is quite different in style from that of the Han. Another difference is that their ancestors' memorial tablets are all written in the Manchu script.

It so happens that many Manchu festivals fall between late autumn and the Spring Festival (Lunar New Year). We were there in late autumn. Even before we entered the village which was to be our destination that day I could feel the festive spirit and, sure enough, there was something going on there. We elbowed our way into the crowd and

saw three performers dressed as tigers and positioned in a triangular formation. With their legs apart, throwing up their arms, they danced the so-called Tiger God Dance to the rhythm of tambourine-like drums beaten by two robed men.

In the old days, Han soldiers serving under the Manchu rulers believed that the tiger was the king of all animals and that the Tiger God was the god of the mountains. A visit from the Tiger God would be enough to expel all evil spirits from a household. Even the demons deep in the mountains or lurking in dark caves would be scared away. The custom of taking the Tiger God around the village is still maintained in this area. Every household had its door wide open to welcome the god.



The men in long robes were apparently shamans, here acting almost like masters of ceremonies. The religion of the Manchus was traditionally shamanistic, in common with many other peoples of northern and northeastern Asia. Shamans are priest-like intermediaries between the everyday natural world and the spirit world who are popularly thought to possess psychic and occult powers.

The ancestors of the Manchu people were expert archers and horsemen; even the Qing emperors enjoyed hunting and outdoor activities. The Manchus still practise many of their traditional sports. We watched one called *sai wei hu* locally. *Wei hu* means 'small boat'. *Sai wei hu* is boat-racing. This amusing festival, a boat-race on land, is held every year on the fifteenth day of the tenth month of the lunar calendar. Each team is made up of five men in single file gripping a pole on either side to form their 'boat'. Four of the team face the direction in which they are going, while the last, the 'helmsman', has to face the other way — a tough task when running at speed! Not surprisingly, it is the helmsmen who reap most of the applause.

Even more interesting was a wedding ceremony we witnessed. Apparently, Manchu wedding rites vary from place to place nowadays, but in the Xiuyan area the ceremony usually lasts for three days. We happened to catch the first day, before the marriage proper. The bridegroom's kitchen was humming with activity like a beehive. Pigs were being slaughtered. Relatives were arriving from all directions to attend the happy event. Tables were being laid both inside and outside the house. Family members were kept busy cooking and distributing dishes to the tables as the guests chattered merrily over the banquet. Villagers told me that even in the winter, when snowflakes



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danced in the air, the wedding feast would be just as chaotic and entertaining.

Talking of the winter, I was told that the Spring Festival was even more exciting. At the approach of the grand occasion, every household would slaughter its pigs. The pigs' heads would be hung on the corn rack where they would be left to freeze until the second day of the second month of the lunar calendar. They would then be retrieved and cooked for a concluding festival known as 'The Dragon Raises Its Head'.

Many racks I saw were already full to the brim with corn but, unfortunately, I could not stay so long.

Translated by Wang Mingjie

*The winter is highlighted by festivals and happy gatherings: the Tiger God Dance exorcizes evil (3, by Cui Boqian); teams pit their skills at sai wei hu (2, by Cao Qinghong); a wedding feast (4, by Zhou Renlong). Pigs' heads on a full corn rack make for a comfortable winter (1, by Zhu Gongfu).*



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LIAONING SPECIAL



# River Boundary Between China and Korea

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY CHAN YAT NIN





**V**ia Fengcheng County I continued east to the border town of Dandong at the mouth of the River Yalu. The latter is an important river which rises on the southern slopes of the Changbai Mountains in southeastern Jilin Province, flows southwest to Dandong and thence into the Yellow Sea. It is eight hundred kilometres long, and along most of its length it forms the boundary between China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In Dandong, which is a key trading and communications centre in the northeast, I first paid a visit to the Jiangbin (Riverside) Park. The buildings on the Korean side in the town of Sinuiju were clearly visible since the river is

only around nine hundred metres wide at this point.

Usually, when a river divides two countries, the boundary is considered to run down the middle of the river. But this is not the case with the River Yalu, which is held jointly by China and North Korea. Thus the river itself is open to all. As long as you don't land on the other side, you cannot be regarded as having crossed the border.

I boarded one of the pleasure

craft which make tours roughly every half hour from the pier in the park to take a closer look. When we were only seven or eight metres away from the Korean bank, our boat slowed. My fellow passengers crowded the windows, many taking out binoculars. Not having any on me, I used my zoom lens to observe a park in Sinuiju. A bevy of Korean girls waved merrily. Somebody beside me pointed out an imposing structure in Korean style on the

bank — a restaurant specializing in the local cold noodles.

### Battle-Scarred Bridge

Thanks to the help of local friends, I managed to get hold of a border zone pass which gave me access to the River Yalu Bridge. There were once two steel-span bridges across the river at this point. One was built in 1909 but was badly damaged during the Korean War in the fifties. The one in present use, built right



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alongside, was erected in 1940. A combined rail and road bridge 940 metres long, it is jointly administered by China and North Korea. This is on an important line, the route by which international passenger and freight trains from Beijing reach Pyongyang, the North Korean capital.

When I and my companions reached the middle of the bridge, a plaque exhorted us to 'STOP!' Obviously this was the national boundary. Without visas we could go no further. As we walked back, I noticed that many of the steel beams were riddled with shrapnel holes. My friends told me that somebody once counted 25,000 of them. The story goes that, during the Korean War, the older bridge was splashed with salt water to make it rusty so that the

*Only the River Yalu separates Dandong from North Korea (1, by Qi Bu, and 3). The bridge across which international trains trundle (5) (3 and 5 by Ma Yiu Chun) is riddled with shrapnel holes (4), reminders of the Korean War. Storm clouds*

*gather (2).*

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enemy planes would think it was derelict and not bother to bomb it. However, under cover of darkness, it was used to transport foodstuffs and military supplies. It was of course hit in the end. Only half of the old bridge still stands, plus a few stone piers.

### Ruins of the Wall

We planned to travel north up the River Yalu to Kuandian County the following day, hoping to see some of the Koreans who live in China and learn something about their customs. The weather was dark and stormy, but after some drizzle the day cleared up slowly.

Our coach raced along the river. In half an hour we reached Hushan (Tiger Hill). The eastern end of the Great Wall reconstructed and extended under the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) is

generally believed to be at Shanhaiguan Pass in eastern Hebei on the border with Liaoning. However, some Chinese experts have recently put forward the theory that the wall starts in the ruins of the village of Liaodong at the foot of Hushan. Others state that this was the end of the 'Ming Pale', an extra wall erected to protect Chinese settlers, which ran in a loop north from Shanhaiguan to the banks of the lower Yalu.

Hushan is only 140 metres high. Our guide pointed out a mound: 'That was the site of the first beacon tower on the eastern frontier.' I went over for a closer look. The beacon tower itself had long since disintegrated; a few bricks lay scattered on the ground and there was a pit twenty metres deep and six metres in diameter.



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From the pit a path led down to the river. Apparently, during Ming times, this path connected the beacon tower with riverside fortifications to the south which, the guide said, were used by Ming troops to assist Korean forces to fend off Japanese pirates who had penetrated this far up the River Yalu.

### A Border You Can Hop Over

We continued our journey upstream along the Yalu, soon reaching the so-called Middle Island which divides the river into two branches. The branch on the Chinese side grew narrower and narrower.

Getting off the coach, we stepped up to a point from where we could see a few Koreans fishing on an embankment on the

guide stopped me. If I had crossed it, I would have been on North Korean soil. An elderly local resident told us that they often had the devil of a job retrieving chickens and geese which had wandered over the border.

The road meandered, following the course of the river and thus the national border. A dam signalled our arrival at Taiping, site of a hydroelectric power station which is a joint effort between the two countries. We set out along the dam. About a dozen metres from the other end we were stopped by a North Korean soldier who emerged from a sentry box and made it clear that we must turn back.

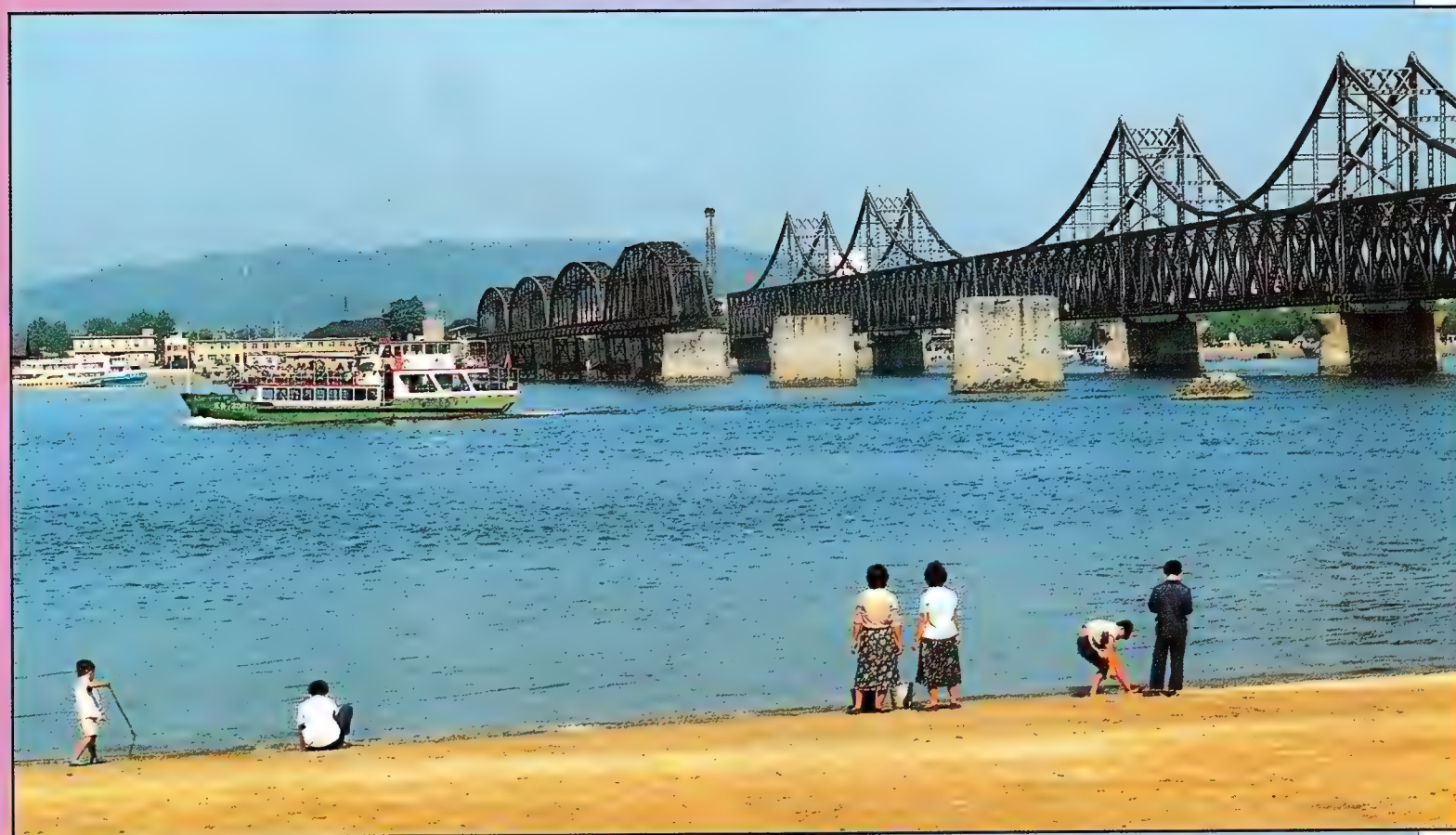
We continued our trip by boat. The river widens beyond the dam to a lake five or six kilometres across. Its waters were calm,

is cultivated. Covering about 0.8 hectares, the garden has been in existence for several hundred years. The best of this ginseng species is said to be as good as wild ginseng, and the root is highly prized as a tonic in traditional Chinese medicine.

We proceeded to a village near Baoshan inhabited by Koreans. We called in on a family and were treated to a typical local meal of dogmeat, fresh mushrooms, *kimchi* (pickles) and cold noodles. Our host declared: 'I'm delighted to have guests from so far away. I know I've already had a drop too much to drink, but I'm going to entertain you with a dance. I think the movements of a drunk are much more graceful!'

I tend not to drink to excess, especially when travelling. But faced with such open-hearted

*Graceful Korean architecture across the Yalu (1, by Ma Yiu Chun), which is spanned by two bridges — one a ruin — side by side (5). Koreans of Kuandian County stepping out (3), while local children get down to a painting contest (2, by Tang Mingzhang). Near Hushan North Korea is this close (4).*



other side. As they were easily within hearing distance, I greeted them in an ordinary tone of voice and they replied — in standard Chinese! Slightly to the north there was another stream about two metres across. I was just about to leap over it when the

reflecting the verdant hills on either side — a peaceful interlude.

### Korean Hospitality

By boat then we arrived at the village of Shizhuzi in Kuandian County, where we visited a garden where ginseng of the *zhu* species

hospitality, I drank deeply and became a bit tipsy. At our host's invitation I joined him in dancing on the grass. More and more villagers gathered to watch, many of them joining us. It was an unforgettable night.

Translated by Wang Mingjie



# Jinzhou Pebble Souvenirs

PHOTOS & TEXT BY CHAN YAT NIN

**J**inshitan (Golden Pebble Beach) in the general area of Dalian is a treasure-house of colourful pebbles of all shapes and sizes. They are known as 'Jinzhou' pebbles since the beach is located in Dalian's Jinzhou District. Sculpted and fashioned by the forces of nature, the pebbles are popular mementoes of a visit to this part of the Liaodong Peninsula.

However, the shops at Jinshitan also sell pebbles which have been processed, amalgamated, painted, glazed and polished to produce human and animal images and typical Chinese folk heroes and heroines.



## Female Portrait

This painted pebble is probably modelled on a plateau-dweller with strong, dark features and attractive hairstyle from China's northwest.



## Elegant Beauties

The pebbles portray three of the twelve most famous beauties from the classical Qing-dynasty novel *A Dream of Red Mansions*. Each figure is made up of two or three individual pebbles.





### Owl Family

A single, simple pebble is painted to represent a mother owl and her fluffy brood.




### Secretive Girl

A woman of Indian or Pakistani origin has her face and head swathed in folds of cloth. This pebble has the appearance of a piece of pottery: the 'cloth' like crackled porcelain, the bare flesh something like unglazed biscuit.



### God of Longevity

The protuberance at one end of this pebble makes a fine bare skull and elongated forehead, typical characteristics of the God of Longevity, just like the long, dense beard. The phallic connotations are obvious! 



# Historical Western Liaoning

PHOTOS BY CHAN YAT NIN  
ARTICLE BY HU YUE

In recent years, two major archaeological discoveries have been made in western Liaoning: traces of a mysterious kingdom of more than 5,000 years ago, and ruins of palaces that can be dated back more than 2,000 years. These new finds only serve to underline the fact that this region in China's northeast was yet another cradle of ancient culture.

muni, which he had been given by the Liao dowager empress. The pagoda towers above single-storey dwellings offering a rare glimpse of an intact ancient townscape.

Just behind is the Guangji (Universal Relief) Monastery, also dating from Liao times, although some of its halls were renovated during the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911). I was surprised



## Reminders of the Liao

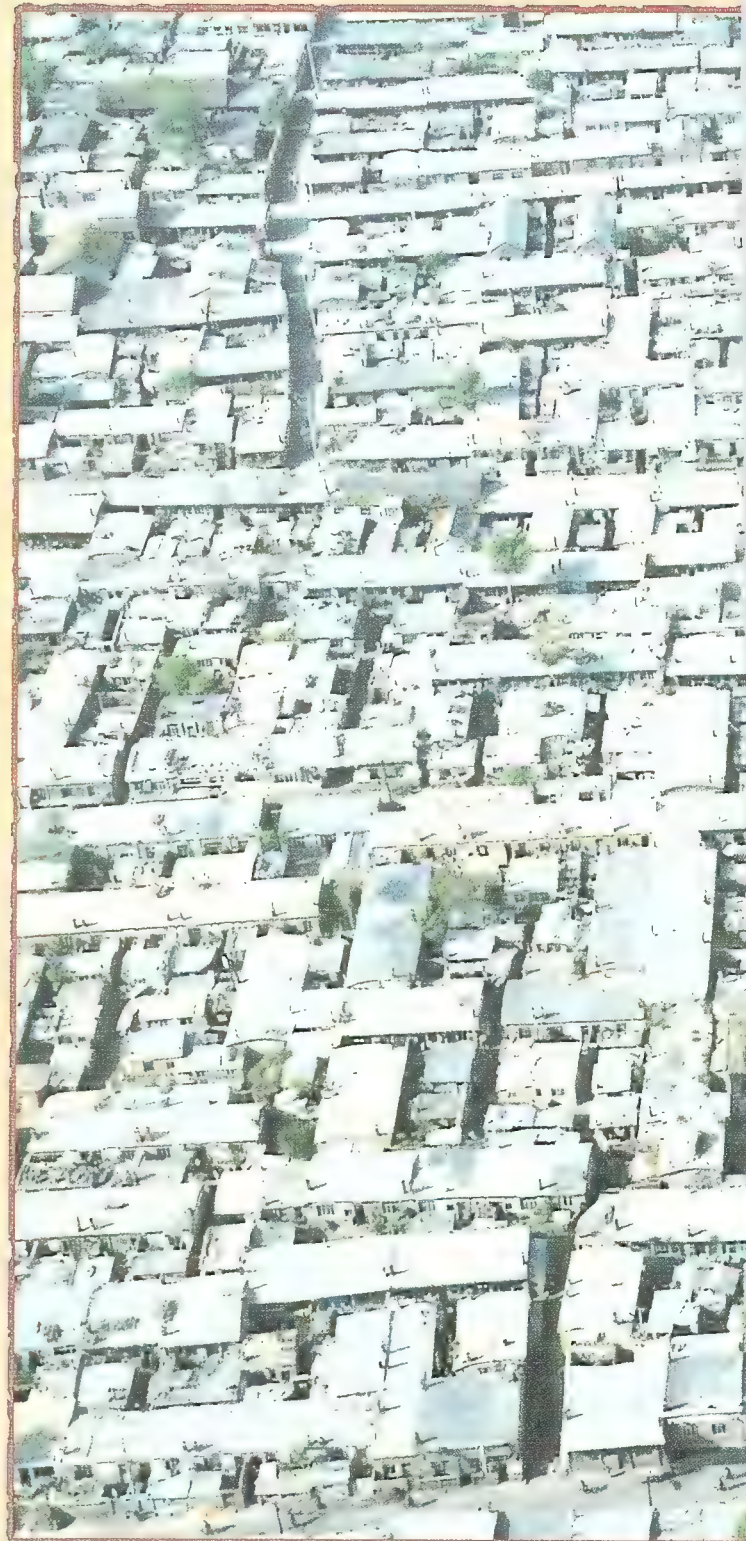
A westbound train from Shenyang, the provincial capital, takes one to Jinzhou, an important city not far from the Liaodong Gulf, in five or six hours. Dig finds have verified that Jinzhou was inhabited as early as 30,000 years ago. As a communications hub, it was also a place of strategic significance and much fought over by rival military commanders.

With the aid of a map I found my way to points of interest in the old heart of the city. Crossing a maze of narrow lanes I reached the foot of a pagoda, its upper sections crumbling and overgrown with weeds. About fifty-seven metres high, it was built in 1057 during the Liao dynasty (916-1125) on the orders of the military governor of the time to enshrine a sacred relic of the historical Buddha, Sakya-

to find that one of its halls was dedicated to Tianhou. Though popular along the coasts of southern and southeastern China, the goddess being the patron saint of fishermen, such a find is rare up here in northeastern China practically on the doorstep of Inner Mongolia.

The historic rulers of this area all came from the north. The Liao dynasty, for example, was founded by the Khitan, a nomadic Tartar people from the far north, descendants of the warlike Xianbei tribe of the fourth and fifth centuries. Around the year 1000 the Liao empire covered the major part of the northeast, including present-day

*Evocative scenes: the Beizhen Temple (1) and the old heart of Jinzhou around the pagoda (2, by Wu Jingxin).*









Inner Mongolia and eastern Mongolia, stretching to Datong in northern Shanxi and south as far as Beijing.

The Liao co-existed with other growing northern powers as well as the Song dynasty (960-1279). The Western Xia (1038-1227) established their capital at Yinchuan near the Huanghe (Yellow River) in what is now the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region; this regime was destroyed by the Mongol armies of Genghis Khan, whose descendants went on to establish the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368). But the main rivals of the Liao were the ambitious Tungus tribes from the area of present-day Heilongjiang Province known as the Nüzhen, who

founded the Jin dynasty (1115-1234). The Nüzhen were in fact responsible for the downfall of the Liao. Going from strength to strength, they took the name 'Manchu' in the seventeenth century and eventually founded China's last feudal dynasty, the Qing.

### Ming-Dynasty Cave Temple

Next on my itinerary was the Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy) Cave 7.5 kilometres northwest of Jinzhou. Said to have been excavated in the Ming dynasty more than five hundred years ago, it shelters a pavilion dedicated to Guanyin, a Chinese adaptation of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. The cave is fronted by a recently constructed

ancient tribe of nomads whose activities were recorded as early as the Spring and Autumn Period (722-481 B.C.). The mountains are often referred to as Lüshan or Mount Lü for short. The rulers of successive generations looked to the mountains with respect. From 460 during the Northern Wei dynasty right through to the Qing, all the emperors would come here to pray and make offerings when they ascended the throne, or at times of natural calamity such as prolonged drought.

Among its scenic attractions the range counts another Guanyin Pavilion, sited in the northern part of the mountains around six kilometres from Beizhen. This pavilion



edifice which matches the pavilion inside, adding to the beauty of this religious site deep in the hills. The views here are magnificent: fiery crimson maple leaves blaze in the autumn, while in winter the whole area is shrouded with snow.

I left Jinzhou and headed north-east to Beizhen County, about one hundred kilometres away. The county town is characterized by the twin pagodas of Chongxing Monastery in the northeastern part of the town. The pagodas are almost identical, over forty metres high, of solid brick and they stand forty-two metres apart. Due to the destruction of the monastery of which they were a part, their date of construction is no longer traceable.

The Yiwulü Mountains sprawl north and south for forty-five kilometres west of Beizhen, rising to 866 metres at Mount Wanghai. The name Yiwulü means 'big mountain' in the tongue of the Donghu, an

is also a structure of the Liao period and it enjoys a beautiful location.

East of the mountains, about two kilometres outside Beizhen, there is an ancient architectural complex of great size — the Beizhen Temple — which can be reached by road. This group of buildings dedicated to the Mountain God is in a remarkably good state of preservation. Built at the end of the sixth century under the Sui dynasty (581-618), it was renovated successively under the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. This was another place where the emperors came regularly every year in the spring and autumn — the rainy seasons — to preside at a rite of offering. In addition, whenever important events affected the nation, the ruler would either send dignitaries or come in person to make ritual sacrifices.

The complex of temples and halls follows the contours of the hillside and covers an area of over

5,000 square metres. To the east there is a temporary palace erected for the use of the Qing emperor Qianlong (reign dates 1736-1795) when he stopped here during an inspection tour. The palace was once a quite magnificent affair, but it is sadly dilapidated. Still, many tablets engraved with prayers and poems by Yuan, Ming and Qing emperors have been preserved — over fifty all told — providing us with a wealth of historical materials.

### Finds of Great Antiquity

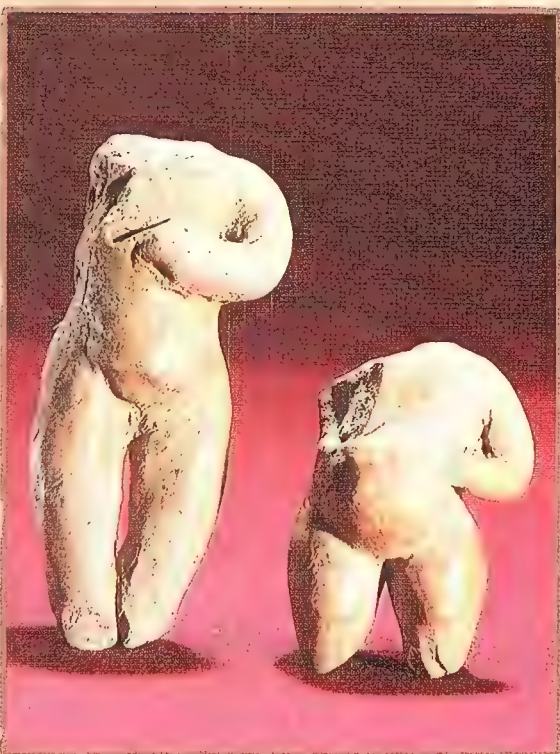
Due west of Beizhen is Chaoyang, a city with a long history

*Beizhen Temple's peaceful setting (1) and Beizhen's twin pagodas (6). Bas-relief of an immortal near Guanyin Pavilion in the Yiwulü range (2); Guanyin Cave (3, by Wu Jingxin). Unveiling the past: site of the altar in Harqin (4) and related finds (5) (both by Zheng Yongji).*





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established during the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 24). It was during the Eastern Jin dynasty (317-420) that the Xianbei, precursors of the Khitan of the Liao dynasty, founded the State of Former Yan in 337 and made Chaoyang their capital, which it remained for ninety-five years.

But the Chaoyang area has obviously been inhabited since prehistory. In 1979, excavations in the village of Dongshanzui in the Harqin Left Wing Mongolian Autonomous County to the southwest of Chaoyang brought to light the ruins of a huge stone altar. Four years later, in 1983, the remains of a temple consecrated to a goddess and several groups of large stone

tumuli, as well as the ruins of a castle-like structure, were discovered in the areas of Jianping and Lingyuan on the Liaoning border fifty kilometres or so from the altar site.

On the basis of the large numbers of relics unearthed, archaeologists have come to the tentative conclusion that here, 5,000 years ago, there existed a primitive society sufficiently developed to form an embryonic form of state or kingdom. These sites are in fact located in the heart of the area of the neolithic Hongshan Culture, named after a township near Chifeng in Inner Mongolia where the first finds were made in 1935 (then within the domain of Liaoning).



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The altar site at Dongshanzui is on a barren, undulating tract of land. An exhibition hall has been erected nearby to display finds, prominent among which are two headless female figurines excavated near the altar. One 7.9 cm tall, the other 5.11, their bellies bulging like those of pregnant women, they are believed to represent fertility or farming

goddesses. Other finds include numerous jade artefacts so finely executed that it is hard to conceive that they have existed for five millennia.

### Xingcheng's Ancient Walls

There was yet another place I really wanted to see, but for this I first had to retrace my steps to Jin-

*The historic battle between Yuan Chonghuan and Nurhachi (1) is filmed on location in Xingcheng. Local residents crowd back into the city after work (3) through one of its ancient gateways (4). Xingcheng's 'Ming-dynasty street' (5) and memorial to the Zu brothers (6) (last two by Zheng Yongji). A Liao-dynasty pagoda in Chaoyang (2).*



zhou, where I changed to a south-bound train.

Fortified in 1430 in the Ming dynasty, Xingcheng was a strategic point of great significance for the Ming along their northern border. It is also one of China's four best preserved ancient cities (the others being Taiyuan in Shanxi, Xi'an in Shaanxi and Jiangling in Hubei). The city is laid out in a square; the walls which surround it are of brick on the outside, while the inner wall, ten metres high, is faced with stone. Each of the four sides has one entrance. Two main thoroughfares, one linking the north and south

gates, the other the east and west, intersect in the centre at the Drum Tower. This is a typical layout for a city of its period.

Xingcheng was the site of many a decisive battle. In 1626 the Manchu leader Nurhachi (1559-1626) of the Aisin Gioro clan — who had declared himself Great Khan of the Later Jin in 1616 — led an army 120,000 strong against Xingcheng (then known as Ningyuan). The famous Ming general Yuan Chonghuan put up a stubborn resistance, although he only had 20,000 men, and Nurhachi was wounded and forced to retreat. In



arthritis and neurasthenia. Eight kilometres from Xingcheng is a good sand beach almost three kilometres long, where a sanatorium has recently been built. In summer visitors may attend the so-called 'Sea Festival', consisting of cultural performances on the beach. People crowd into the place from as far away as Inner Mongolia.

the mountains. Before long I came to the border region between Liaoning and Hebei west of Suizhong County, site of the Jiumenkou (literally, 'Nine-Gate') Pass. This section of the Great Wall, built in the Ming dynasty, is the only one to boast nine gates: three on the mountain, the rest along the river in the valley. This is where the Manchus breached the defences of the Great Wall on their march to Beijing in 1644.

### Jiumenkou and Shihuang's Seaside Palace

From Xingcheng I travelled south along the Beijing-Shenyang Highway then took a side road into

Originally, a large area of ground at Jiumenkou was paved with stone slabs. Seasonal flooding often washed these slabs away. To



August of that year he died, his hopes for overthrowing the Ming unfulfilled. This his descendants managed to do after repeated attempts, founding the Qing dynasty.

A 'Ming-dynasty street' has been built at the city's south gate. This is a flagstoned thoroughfare about ten metres wide which leads past the Drum Tower to the north gate and is lined with buildings in Ming style, some of them genuine. The street contains a memorial put up to honour the Zu brothers, two senior generals who gave great service to the last emperor of the Ming, Chongzhen.

Outside the city to the southeast lies a group of hot springs which have been developed into a spa. The springs, which gush out at a temperature of 70°C, are said to be effective in treating skin diseases,





solve the problem, somebody had the idea of making holes in the shape of a silver ingot between the slabs and pouring molten iron into them to hold the slabs together. With the passage of time, the iron filling has long since disappeared.

There is a spacious watch-tower on the wall; there must have been many troops stationed here. The defensive works are ingenious. The wall below the tower near the ground is hollow, and there are concealed embrasures at waist height. If enemies approached to launch an attack by scaling the Great Wall with ladders, soldiers hidden actually inside the wall could give the invaders a nasty surprise!

My trip to historical western Liaoning ended with a drive south to Wanjia, a township beside the

Bohai Sea. The fine sandy beach here is very broad, its waters clear. Right near the coast preliminary excavations have revealed ruins of six Qin and Han palaces over an area of fourteen square kilometres. Specialists believe that the largest ruins, covering 150,000 square metres, are those of a temporary palace erected for Emperor Shihuang of the Qin dynasty (221-207 B.C.) when he undertook inspection tours to the Bohai Sea in the years 215 and 209 B.C. The ruins consist of a main palace building rising in three tiers or terraces, several annexes, walls along the sea and sundry passages. Many relics have been unearthed here, among them a large number of Qin-dynasty carved hollow bricks and eaves tiles in a style said to resemble that of the

emperor's palace in his capital Xianyang, more than 1,500 kilometres to the west in what is now Xi'an in Shaanxi.

Translated by Ren Jiazhen

*Enjoying a dip in a hot spring near Xingcheng (1) and laying in cabbage for the winter (2). An artist's impression of Shihuang's seaside palace (5) and genuine Qin-dynasty eaves tiles (4). A watch-tower (6) and remaining stone slabs (3) at Jiumenkou.*



4



5



6





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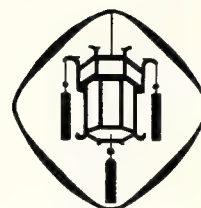
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# A VISIT TO JINHUA — LAND OF HAM

PHOTOS BY WANG MIAO  
TEXT BY HU YUE



**T**here are three varieties of Chinese ham. Xuan ham, known as Xuan Tui, comes from Yunnan Province in the southwest. Bei Tui, the northern variety, is made in the regions north of the River Yangtse, and Nan Tui, the southern variety, in the areas south of the river. Of the third kind, the ham prepared in Jinhua in central Zhejiang Province enjoys the highest reputation.

Stories differ as to the origin of ham in China. The most popular is that connected with the national hero Zong Ze, a twelfth-century general who resisted the invading hordes of the Jin towards the end of the Northern Song and in the early Southern Song dynasty. It is said that when Zong's armies were fighting the Jin invaders in the Bianjing area where the capital was located (present-day Kaifeng in Henan), the people of his hometown Yiwu in central Zhejiang sent large quantities of pork to

the front to boost his war effort. To prevent the meat from going bad over the long distance, they devised a way of preserving it in salt. The soldiers found the preserved meat particularly tasty. At the request of the general, the people of Yiwu continued to provide the soldiers with preserved pork or ham throughout the war.

In the course of time, repeated improvements made the ham outstanding in colour, aroma and taste. And best of all was the ham from Jinhua and the neighbouring counties of Yiwu and Dongyang. Ever more farmers took to making ham. Zong Ze was honoured as the father of the ham industry, his portrait appearing in every ham shop with burning candles and incense as a token of respect. He came to be considered the patron saint of the trade.





According to historical records, Jinhua ham has a history of over eight hundred years. In the Song dynasty it was listed as tribute to the imperial court. During the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), such ham even made its way as far as Japan, Southeast Asia and the West.

Aromatic, dark-red Jinhua ham keeps for quite a long time. Its quality has much to do with the breed of hog used. A special breed with black head and rump and white body and legs is believed to be the best, as the animals are thin-skinned and have small bones with heavy, fine-fibred muscles.

Strict specifications are set for Jinhua ham: weight, length and fat content must reach the required standards. The ham is further classified according to the time of year it is made. Mid-winter ham, early-winter ham and spring ham are among the best known. Other varieties of Jinhua ham include crescent-shaped ham, a whole ham being cut in this shape, and bamboo-leaf ham which has been smoked with bamboo leaves. Sweet ham is prepared by dipping it in sugar.

Although Yiwu is reputed to be the birthplace of Chinese ham, the very best ham is made at Dongyang, a county just to the east. During my visit to Jinhua, I requested a friend to take me to see how ham was made. He said, 'The best Jinhua ham comes from Dongyang, and the best Dongyang ham comes from Shangjiang, so why don't we go to Shangjiang to have a look around?'

Shangjiang is a small hamlet of only a hundred households a little over ten kilometres from Jinhua. Practically every family there still makes ham in the traditional way. The moment we entered the hamlet, a strong smell, salty but aromatic, drifted towards us. We stepped into one of the old-fashioned houses and saw two whole hams hanging before the window. I was told that ham should be left in the breeze to dry and will then last three to five years. Hams hung everywhere in the village, even side by side with ancestors' tablets inside homes.

Not far from the first house we visited we came upon an inscription on a house wall, 'Worthy of Its Name', and three hams hanging on a bamboo pole from the window. Inside, the householder was scraping a whole ham with a small knife. On the other side of the room, about a dozen fresh-looking hams were dangling from a wooden frame.

Our host offered us a plate of ham slices, and we chatted while munching. The process of making ham, he told us, consists of five steps: selection, salting, drying in the open air, fermenting and grading. As soon as winter sets in, every family starts buying in hog thighs which are cleaned and then plastered with a thin layer of salt. A thick layer of salt is added the next day, then the leg is put into a vat of crude salt and kept there for twenty-five days, after which it is taken out and washed. The next step is to expose it to the sun for four days. Around the winter solstice it is taken indoors and hung in a cool place until early February. Then it is time to trim the ham — cutting out superfluous parts, flattening the top and making a rounded bottom. The trade mark 'Jinhua Ham' is then impressed on it with sealing wax.

And there you are!

Translated by Qian Weifan





Photo by Li Li







# Residence of a Prince of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom

PHOTOS BY WANG MIAO    ARTICLE BY YAN JUN







3



4

### The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom

The Taiping Rebellion was launched by Hong Xiuquan (1814-1864), a teacher from a Hakka farming family in Guangdong who, desperate at the plight of the common people under the Qing and the general demoralization of his country during the Opium War (1840-1842), claimed to have received a mandate from heaven to bring peace to earth. 'All men under heaven are brothers and all women are sisters' was his motto; many of his doctrines were derived from his own interpretation of Christian teachings.

In 1850, with the country racked by famine, Hong Xiuquan rose at the head of a peasant army allied with craftsmen. Calling themselves the Taiping Army, they captured several provinces as well as the important city of Nanjing, which they made the capital of their 'Heavenly Kingdom of Peace', renaming it Tianjing.

At the height of their success, the Taiping forces held much of southern China and threatened to topple the Qing dynasty (beset in any case by over one hundred uprisings in the decade following the Opium War). However, the Qing armies finally succeeded in quelling the Taiping Army with Hong Xiuquan's death in Nanjing in June 1864, although a few remnants struggled on until 1868.

**Reminders of an important historical episode: eaves tile inscribed 'Taiping Tianguo' (1), model of Prince Shi (2), dragons on both the wall screen (3) and wall supports (4). The cannon in front of the main entrance (5) (1, 2, 3 and 5 by Xia Gongran).**



5





**B**eside the River Wujiang in Jinhua, western Zhejiang Province, stands a huge architectural ensemble — now a museum — which was formerly the official residence of Li Shixian, otherwise known as Prince Shi of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851-1864).

Of peasant origin, Li (1834-1865) joined the anti-Qing Taiping Army in 1851 and was later given the title Prince Shi by Hong Xiuquan, instigator and leader of the movement, when he became one of Hong's top generals. In 1861 the troops under Li's command seized Jinhua, then a major military stronghold, so he decided to locate his high command there as well as his official residence, renovating and expanding buildings used by the Qing court to hold imperial examinations at grass-roots level. Facing the Wujiang from its position against Beishan Hill, the residence occupies an elevated site in the eastern part of Jinhua, commanding a panoramic view of the whole city. Li also laid out an enormous parade ground where he could drill as many as 100,000 troops at once.

It was here that Li Shixian drew up plans for the deployment of his troops. He was such a skilled commander that within less than six months practically the whole of Zhejiang had fallen into his hands. Li died at the early age of thirty-one, killed by his own subordinates in 1865 after the Taiping Army suffered overall defeat.

Like the residences of many other princes of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, this complex, mainly built of wood, is decorated to a very considerable extent. There is a large number of murals. Patterns are painted on beams and columns, doors and windows; stone, brick and wood carvings can be seen everywhere. And, despite everything which has happened since the Taiping Army pulled out of Jinhua, this official residence has survived in more or less good condition for more than a hundred years. It is now one of the few sites





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of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom left to us and is in fact the largest in scale as well as the best preserved, with the greatest number of artefacts.



#### Residence and Military Offices

Before reaching the main entrance to the residence, you first pass a drum tower and archway. Next comes a wall screen, about six metres high and over seventeen metres long, with an elegantly executed carved dragon roundel over one metre in diameter set in the centre; there are also quite a few relief carvings of dragons on the walls around the screen. In those days, dragon motifs were reserved exclusively for the emperor and the imperial household. Nevertheless, they are also found in the residences of princes of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

Beyond the screen wall a drum pavilion lies to the west, while to the east there is an ancient cannon on which are inscribed the following words: 'Made and installed in the seventh year (*dingsi*) of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom'. In other words, 1857.

The main entrance lies ahead. A flight of stone steps leads to the Gate of Protocol and along a passageway to the main hall. This is also known as the conference room, as this was the place where the Taiping Army leaders met to discuss strategy and propound their religious doctrines. Here Prince Shi elaborated his plans for the



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**Details of carvings (1, 2) and paintings (3). Museum exhibits: a Taiping Army general's fine silk jacket (4), simple jerkins for ordinary soldiers (5) and coins minted for the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (6) (1, 4 and 6 by Xia Gongran).**



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1



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seizure of Zhejiang. The interior of the hall was once decorated with murals and colourful designs. Unfortunately these have been painted over; all that remains are six paintings of flowers and birds on the wall between the purlins that support the rafters.

Beyond the main hall is an intermediate chamber leading into the second hall, in which stands a statue of Li Shixian. The third hall contains material on the latter's life and exploits.

From these halls you pass to the west wing which once contained the living quarters. It is sub-divided into four sections, each consisting of nine rooms or halls. They are connected by a courtyard where trees and flowers grow.

The third and fourth sections are now used as exhibition rooms for relics of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom — documents, photographs and drawings. There are also displays of such articles as the short outer jackets embroidered with dragons worn by Taiping Army generals, uniforms for the rank and file, coins bearing the words 'Taiping Tianguo' (Heavenly Kingdom of Peace) on their obverse and a dragon design on their reverse, as well as eaves tiles and gutter spouts.



### Huge Decorative Murals

The best of the numerous buildings in the west wing are those of the second section, especially the central hall, where the brackets between the top of the columns and the crossbeams in the corridor — carved with decorative motifs and bearing colourful drawings — leave one with an impression of real grandeur. The beams, columns and walls are also painted. This central hall is said to have been Prince Shi's office and there is a model of him behind the desk. A frayed yellow banner bearing his name and title hangs on the door. But it is the large murals on the hall's eastern and western walls which command the greatest attention.

The mural on the east wall portrays the Taiping Army assaulting a beleaguered city. In the upper left-hand corner of the mural we can see a four-storeyed watch-tower of wood. In the forest to the right of the tower stand ten flagstaves behind which are four buildings serving as the Taiping Army camp. Behind these again is a brook, with mountain after mountain receding into the background. The city, its main gates tightly closed, can be seen tucked away in the valley. On the turret over the gate there hangs a flag to show that the city has not yet fallen. The atmosphere appears to be tense, as though attack were imminent. This mural is 2.23 metres high and 3.46



metres wide. It is a great pity that a window has been opened up right in its centre.

The west wall is painted with a mural which depicts the residence itself, with its verandas, corridors, pavilions, hidden courts and terraces of complex layout and exquisite design. We can see the courtyards connected by winding corridors, artificial hills and rockeries covered with trees and flowers. Inside the rooms we can even make out books and paper, brushes, ink and all the other traditional accoutrements of the scholar.

The corridor outside this central hall, like those elsewhere in the residence, strikes one by its refinement. Of particular note are the wooden carvings on the columns and the paintings on the ceiling. On the wall outside the entrance to this corridor there is a giant painting of a dragon among clouds — a faded golden dragon with open mouth and outstretched claws, rolling and drifting in the clouds — of extraordinary power and dynamism. Further along the wall, two lions play with a ball in a fine, delicately drawn composition.

That murals are found all over the prince's residence is due in no small measure to the fact that, after the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom settled on Nanjing as its capital, it set up a bureau directly under the central artisans administration which specialized in murals and other paintings.



**A copy (2) of the large mural which has been ruined by the insertion of a window (1) (both by Xia Gongran). Exquisite corridor carvings (3); paintings were executed on wall surface and wooden structural elements (5). The banner of Prince Shi (4).**



4



5



3





Besides, while the dragon stood for the emperor, people in ancient China also looked to birds and animals such as the phoenix, elephant, unicorn and eagle as symbols of militancy, heroism and prowess. This explains why the leaders of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom chose to decorate their residences with such subjects.



#### Motifs Based on Folk-Tales

Another feature of these paintings is the way in which they are often based on folk-tales. In one part of the west wing, for instance, there is a particularly large fresco depicting Huang Chuping ordering rocks to transform themselves into sheep. About 2.3 metres high and 3.3 metres long, this painting tells a story widely known in Jinhua.

According to an ancient book, Huang Chuping — who lived in the Jin dynasty (265-470) — became a shepherd when he was fifteen. One day, when he was out with his flock, he met a Taoist priest who, seeing his good nature, took him to a stone hut on Mount Jinhua and taught him all the occult craft of Taoism.

Huang thus vanished from sight and his elder brother searched for him in vain for many, many years. However, forty years





3

after his disappearance, the brothers were reunited through the assistance of another Taoist priest.

Ever the farmer, his elder brother asked him what had become of the flock of sheep. Huang Chuping led him to the eastern slope of the mountain where there were piles of whitish-coloured rocks. Seeing his brother's perplexity, Chuping started to shout at the rocks: 'On your feet, my sheep!' And no sooner had he stopped shouting than there stood a flock of sheep.

In addition to using legends and folktales as motifs, artists also added auspicious animals, flowers and birds as a token of their hopes that the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom would last for a long time and that there would be peace on earth.

Outside the west wing there is a large expanse of open space — the parade ground we mentioned earlier — where upwards of 100,000 soldiers could gather. This must have been a most impressive and daunting sight.

Behind this again, flowers and trees grow amid magnificent scenery in the garden of the prince's official residence. There is a hillock with a walled structure on top containing pavilions and terraces, exactly as depicted in the mural in the central hall. We can imagine Li Shixian sitting there to enjoy the blossoms and their scent by the light of the moon.

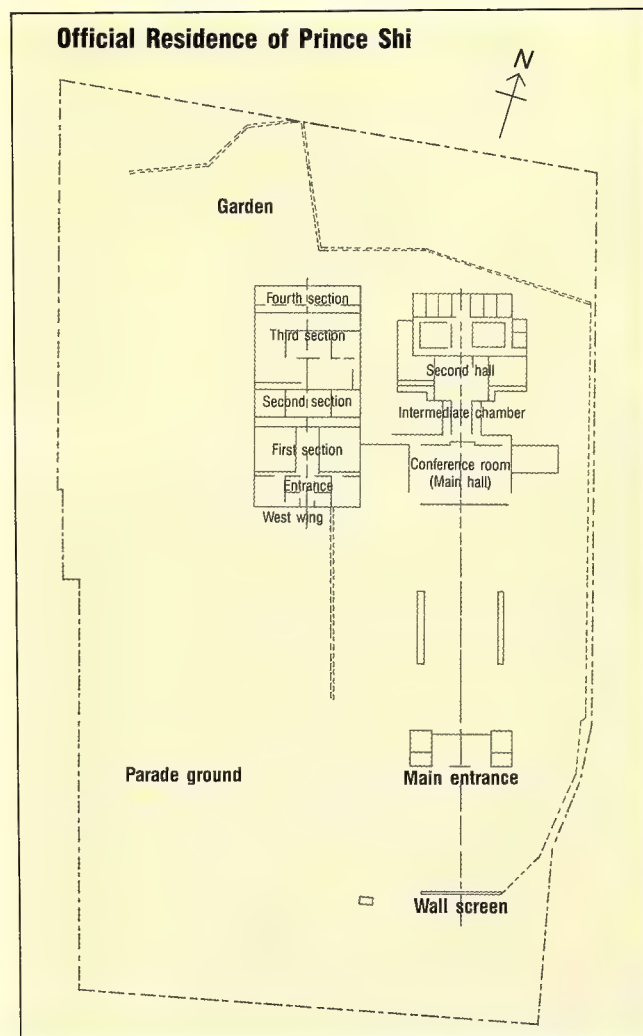
The wall round the garden is deep yellow, making it impossible to paint a golden dragon on it. Instead, the wall features a bas-relief frieze of a coiling, writhing dragon in stone.



Translated by Ren Jiazhen

**Editor's note:** Yan Jun is curator of the Prince Shi of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Memorial Museum.

**The dragon figures prominently, whether moving majestically through clouds (1) or adorning a frieze (2). Delicately drawn lions play with a ball (3).**







# The Making of Child Monks

PHOTOS & ARTICLE  
BY CHEN ANDING







3



4

**A** certain day in January (roughly the third month of the Dai calendar) turned out to be an important occasion in the village of Mangui in Xishuangbanna, southwestern Yunnan Province.

When I arrived, everyone in the village had been up since the crack of dawn. Some were preparing rice balls and other festive dishes, others were checking joss sticks and candles and sacrificial offerings, others again were bringing out the gifts they had prepared a long time before. A warm and jubilant atmosphere filled the air.

The villagers were preparing frenziedly for a special ceremony which was to be held to consecrate nine young boys, an occasion as important to the Dai as the Spring Festival is to the Han Chinese.

### Sign of Education

The Dai people of Xishuangbanna are devout followers of Hinayana Buddhism, often called 'Little Vehicle' Buddhism, based on the original teachings

of Buddha. It entered China from its Indian starting point via the southern route through what are now Sri Lanka, Burma, Kampuchea and Thailand.

Almost every Dai village has its Mian temple and, according to the Dai religious tradition, every male must be a Buddhist monk for a certain period of his life to be considered well-educated. If he is not temple-trained or does not become a monk, he will be thought of as *yanli* (a barbarian) — in other words, stupid and uncivilized. His social standing in the village will be zero and he will not even be entitled to get married.

Understandably, therefore, every male child in the village takes part in religious activities together with his parents from a very early age, worshipping the Buddha and learning to recite the scriptures. At seven or eight, the boy becomes a *keyong*, something like a novice, and goes to the village temple to learn the Buddhist canon and doctrines, although without any special ceremony or need to wear special

clothing. After he is well versed in the scriptures and is familiar with the rituals and usages of the temple, he formally joins the religious community as a *panan*, child monk.

### Preparing the Keyong

It was still very early when I reached the village square, but gradually villagers gathered to welcome the *keyong* as they came in from their homes in outlying districts.

Suddenly, there was a loud cheer. Looking in the direction of the noise, I saw a young boy seated on a man's shoulders entering the open space. He was dressed up in some style, with a resplendent crown-like hat and clothing

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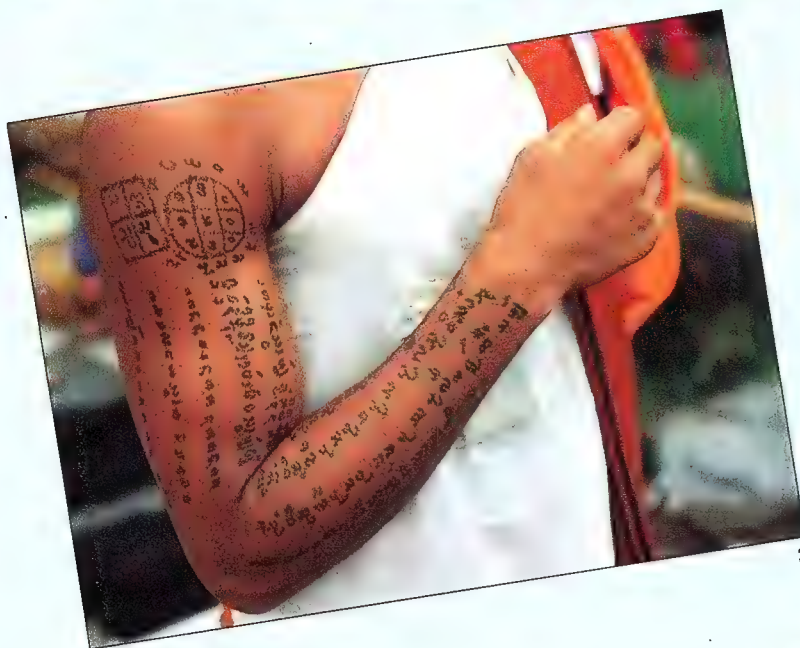
**Escorted by relatives and well-wishers (3), the keyong arrive in the village (1). Offerings of bamboo 'trees' bearing real paper money (4) are placed in front of the pagodas (2).**

---





1



3



to match. His relatives and friends clustered around him holding gifts, some bamboo structures covered with paper flowers and paper money, others daily necessities such as books and notepads, clothes, shoes and caps. It is said that the more gifts a *keyong* receives, the greater the honour to his family.

Tradition forbids parents to accompany their son in person to the temple.

A long time beforehand, they will have chosen a man from among their relatives or close friends to act as the boy's adoptive father. One week before the ceremony, the boy goes to stay in this person's home and all the preparations for consecration are carried out by him. During that week, the child is not permitted to touch the ground with his feet. His hair and eyebrows are shaved off and he is given a ritual bath by his adop-

tive father. When the big day dawns, the boy dons completely new clothes and shoes and rides to the village on his adoptive father's back, sometimes for several kilometres, although those who live a long way away may travel in by cart or motorcycle.

One *keyong* even arrived on a tractor. His clothes and shoes were not up to the quality of the earlier arrivals, but they were obviously new.



## Songs of Blessing

Once all the *keyong* had arrived, the square bustled with noise and excitement as they were escorted in a long file towards the Mian temple. All the way the villagers sang songs of blessing and set off firecrackers. Old women scattered rice along the route and muttered phrases in the Dai language which I was unable to understand. I noticed that many of the crowd were carrying rolled-up mattresses. Seeing my puzzlement, an old lady beside me advised me laughingly: 'You'll understand what they're for once we get to the temple.'

The procession passed several pagodas or stupas to reach the main hall of the temple. In the centre there was a gold statue of Buddha with a platform on one side. The nine *keyong* were set down at the back of the hall on a pile of the mattresses I had remarked on. There they lay, waiting for the ceremony proper to begin.

I had never before seen so much noise and commotion inside a temple. Relatives from near and far pressed forward to congratulate the *keyong* and bring them gifts. Bright paper flowers were stuck on three sides of the mat-

tresses and even the cotton padded quilts were brilliantly coloured. Baskets of food were set in front of each child, far more than they could possibly dispose of in one day.

## A Solemn Moment

Despite the solemnity of such an occasion, boys will be boys. The *keyong*, most of whom were around nine years of age, were mischievous in their keyed-up state, talking and laughing, even threatening to get up and walk around. The adults accompanying them hastily rushed to coax them to lie down again.

The ceremony eventually started in the main part of the hall, where a dozen monks of all ages had gathered. The *keyong* were moved to the feet of the gold Buddha. There they recited the scriptures in unison, gradually chanting louder and louder so that, by the end, they were shouting, their voices hoarse, the veins on their necks standing out. The master of ceremonies then made a speech in Dai and the *keyong* stood up in turn, took off their clothes with the help of the monks and changed into the saffron robe and round cap of a Buddhist monk. Finally, they were given a

religious name. They were now formally *panan*.

This took about two hours, then the crowd began to disperse. But the child monks were obliged to stay in the temple for the first three days, after which they would go out every day to beg for alms and food like all the other monks. Their regimen is in fact not so oppressive. They are allowed to go home and visit their families occasionally and they do enjoy free time.

As they grow older, according to how well they master their religious studies, they will be promoted to big monk, second-rank master or first-rank master. But most of them will in fact resume secular life at the age of around seventeen or eighteen so that they can get married and have a family. C

Translated by Yu Zai Xin

**Enthroned in state, the *keyong* wait for the start of the ceremony (1). Later, after being given a set of monk's clothing (3) and a religious name (5), they embark on the monastic life (4, 6). Most Dai men, monks or not, favour tattoos (2).**



5



6



# *Authentic Works by Four Ming-Dynasty Painters*

PHOTOS BY GUO QUN  
ARTICLE BY NIE CHONGZHENG

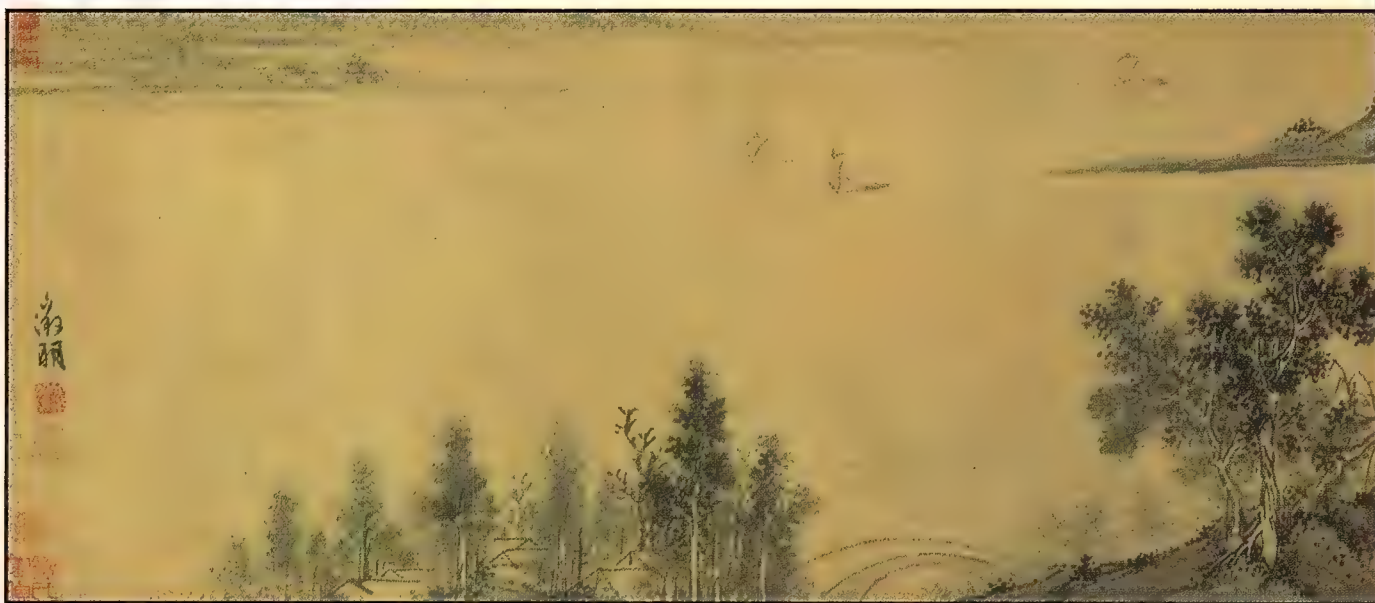


Photo by Qi Lianqing

**D**uring the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the mid-Ming dynasty, Suzhou proved an attractive city for painters and scholars. At that time the city boasted four distinguished painters closely knit professionally and by links of friendship, namely Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin and Qiu Ying. The unique styles of these four not only won them admiration from their contemporaries; they have also become known to posterity as the 'Four Masters of the Ming Dynasty' or the 'Four Masters of the Wu School' (Suzhou at that time being the capital of the Wu District).

They emerged at a time when the Zhejiang School had reached the height of its influence in the world of Chinese landscape painting. The Zhejiang School, headed by Dai Jin (active between 1430 and 1450) and based in Hangzhou, was popular from the early Ming to the Qing between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. This school inherited the romantic traditions of the Southern Song (1127-1279) in water and ink painting, which was distinguished by its compact composition and bold and vigorous strokes. However, imitated generation after generation, the school's style became so stultified that it turned out nothing but conventionally pretty frameworks empty of content or soul. The brushwork became unrestrained and wild in the extreme.

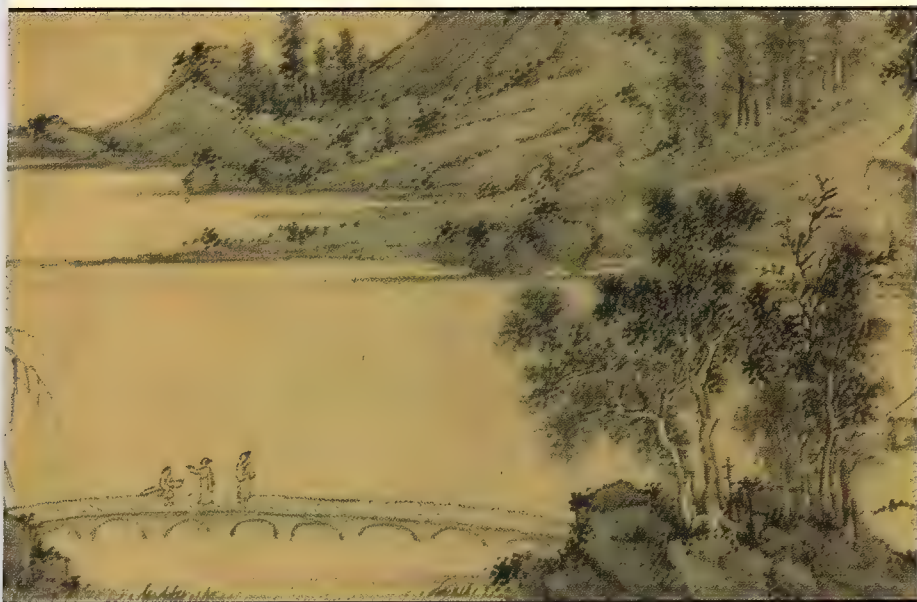
The emergence of the Wu School in Suzhou saw the gradual replacement of the overblown style of the Zhejiang School by a return to fine, meticulous brushwork and a light and delicate touch copied from the landscape painters of the Northern Song (960-1127). Nevertheless, both of these schools can be classified as being in the literati tradition, that is, they involved paintings by scholars or men of letters — amateurs — as opposed to works by folk artists and professional court painters. Their subject-matter is much the same: landscapes, bamboos, rocks, birds, trees and flowers such as orchids, chrysanthemums and plum blossoms. Romantic charm is stressed in both cases. Painters of this type attached great importance to accomplishments in literature and calligraphy. Through the ages such literati painting has had a great influence on the development of Chinese aesthetics as well as ink and water and freehand techniques.



### Listening to the Waters

This painting, executed by Shen Zhou (1427-1509) towards the end of his life, demonstrates his unique style and creativeness in composition. The extreme symmetry, with the mountain and river on a single axis, was audacious at the time. Concise and clear brush strokes in dark grey-blue vividly portray a mountain peak with, below it, a stream. Passing a temple at the mountain's foot, the stream becomes ever wider as it winds towards the bank upon which sits a scholar. By means of simple, spare and disciplined brushwork the painter conveys the man's leisurely yet detached enjoyment of the pastoral scene as he listens to the burbling of the brook.

Shen Zhou's paintings often contain just such a figure apparently free from all cares — reminding us of his own desire to lead a life among mountains and rivers far from the preoccupations of the world. The oldest of the four painters, Shen Zhou never made any attempt to take the imperial examinations and, in fact, once rejected an official post he was offered by the local prefect. He chose to live in seclusion, devoting his heart and soul to the pursuits of painting and poetry-writing.



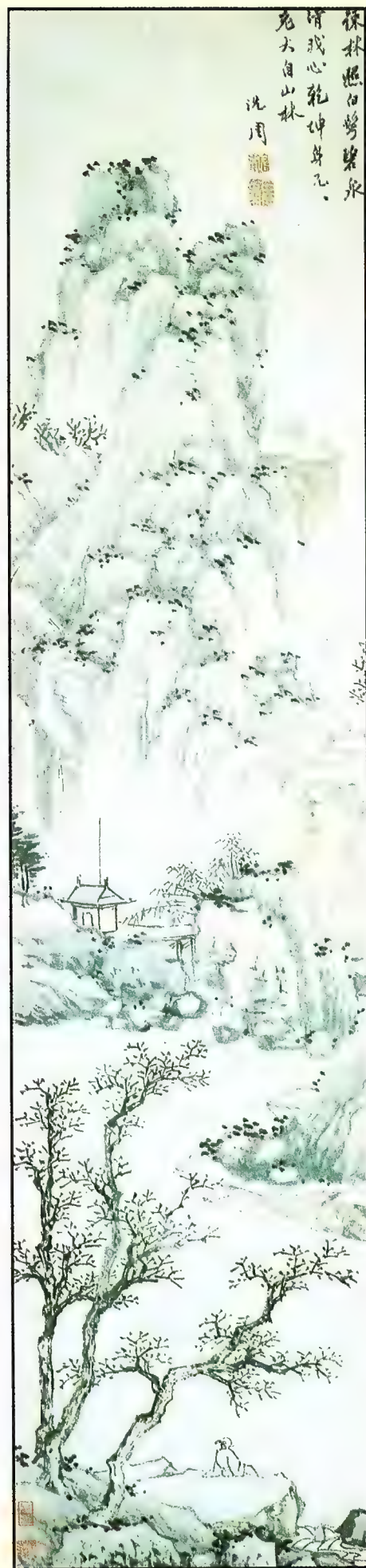
### By the Lakeside

Wen Zhengming (1470-1559) was Shen Zhou's pupil in his youth, so it is not surprising that they share many similarities in style. They also tend to pick on the same subject-matter — traditional gardens, mountains and lakes in the manner of Jiangnan, the area south of the River Yangtse. Their brushwork is also similar, with slender, graceful strokes. However, Wen Zhengming had the habit of adding a poem to most of his paintings.

The scene here is dominated by a vast lake which is merely a space the artist has left blank. Instead of conveying the ripples on the water, the artist turns his attention to depicting passers-by on the bridge, the lakeside in the foreground, junks and mountains in the distance, subtly leaving it to us to sense the extent of the calm waters.

Wen Zhengming had the courage to break through the conventions of scattered perspective — traditional Chinese landscape painting has three viewpoints: level, deep and high — to employ a realistic technique similar to sketching from nature. He employed thick ink and bold lines to depict trees and houses nearby, thin ink and fine lines for those in the distance, creating a correct sense of perspective and thereby making the lake seem all the vaster. He shared with his teacher this natural approach to landscape painting.

In his later years Wen Zhengming wrote poetry and painted for his own enjoyment. His work was in great demand, but he never stooped to paint for the influential clique of eunuchs, a fact which illustrates his lofty and unyielding character. His paintings were admired by his contemporaries for their intellectual content as well as for their intrinsic beauty.







### Flute Music on Pine Creek

This painting bears neither signature nor seal of its creator but, judging by the fine brushwork, the blues and greens, and the style, it is a work by Qiu Ying (c. 1494-1552) who excelled at archaic 'green-and-blue' scrolls in the manner of the Tang dynasty (618-907).

Qiu Ying's fine use of the brush is evident in the fisherman, a white robe casually draped over one shoulder, who is playing a flute on his boat. The hair, eyebrows — even the *chiaroscuro* of the robe's folds — are carefully and minutely depicted. Furthermore, the artist has not neglected the texture of the boat awning, the movement of the ripples, the scaly bark on the pines, the red, green and silvery leaves on the distant trees.... Yet the towering cliffs and gnarled pines in the background are executed with an almost three-dimensional effect in a very firm hand. We can sense the cold, solid, unyielding consistency of the rocks. Long years of practice lie behind this display of brushwork artistry, the flowing lines of infinite precision, incisive but vigorous.

The details about Qiu Ying's life are scanty. As far as we know, he was once a stone mason and later turned to painting for a living. He was an excellent copyist and imitated old paintings, adopting different brushwork techniques to depict various subjects according to his clients' requirements. Nevertheless, he sought always to create new styles.




### Fairy Playing the Flute

The most unrestrained and eccentric of the four was Tang Yin (1470-1523). A man of letters, he also earned a living by selling his paintings. His range of subjects was wider than that of either Shen Zhou or Wen Zhengming. Apart from landscapes, birds and flowers, he excelled at portraits of women. The painting shown here is one of his masterpieces.

The 'fairy' musician is conceived in a spirit of idealism and thus cannot be regarded as a paragon of beauty, although she does have 'willow-leaf' eyebrows, long, narrow eyes and a cherry-like mouth. What Tang Yin sought to express through this painting was perhaps his own character, self-expression being an important point for all these painters.

The fairy's features, hairstyle, ornaments, collar and sleeves are depicted in such detail that the individual pearls on her hair ornaments and bracelets are clearly visible. But, at the same time, Tang adopted flowing strokes to interpret the pleats and folds of her robes, ignoring the meticulous way of rendering dress details demanded by tradition. This free and lively style exactly reflects Tang's own easy-going nature.

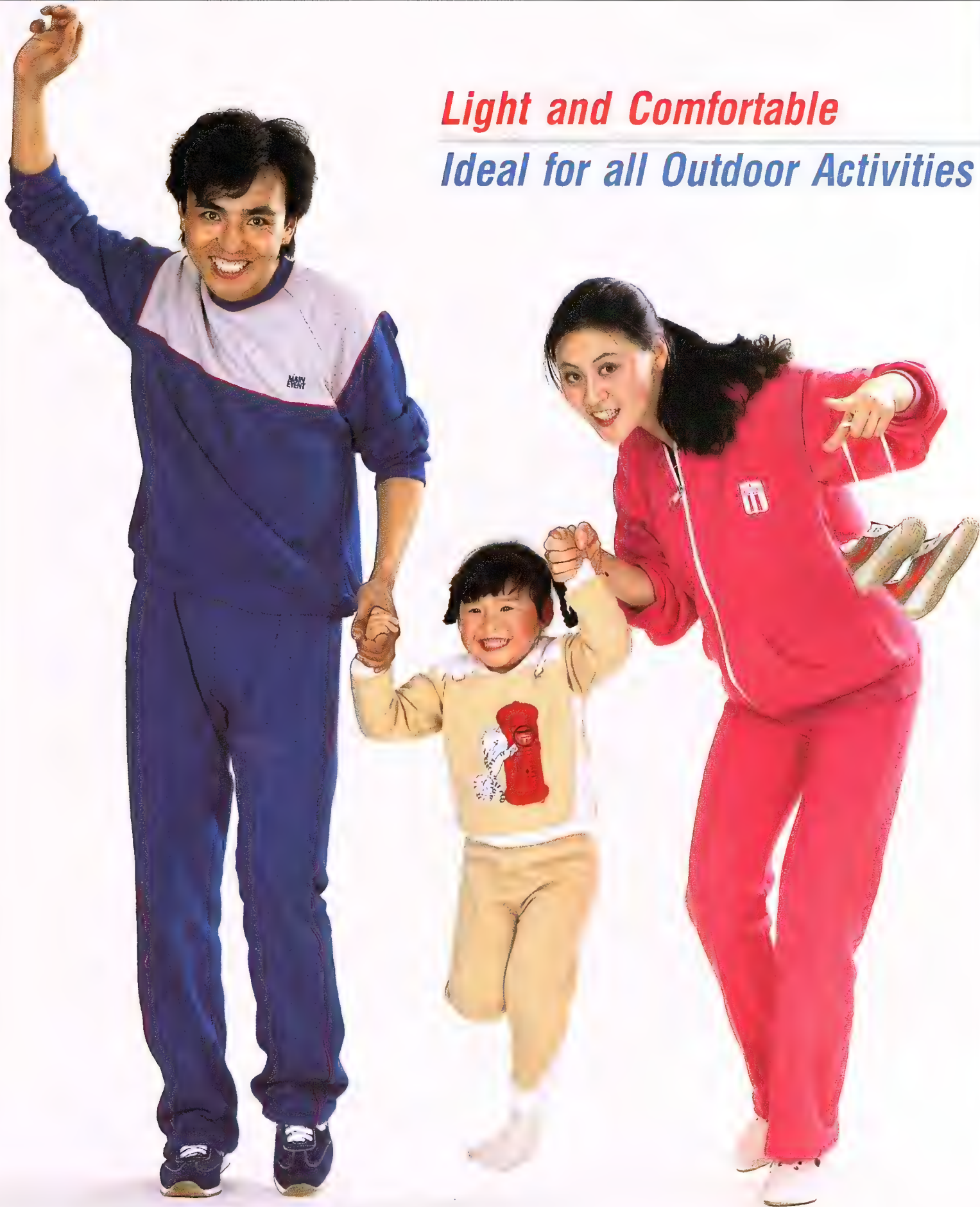
When he was a young man Tang Yin craved official rank but was later dismissed from office for 'irregularities' at the imperial examinations. From then on, he followed his own bent, roaming the famous mountains and rivers, frequenting wineshops, and claiming to be the 'most talented and romantic man of letters south of the Yangtse'. 

Translated by Gu Weizhou





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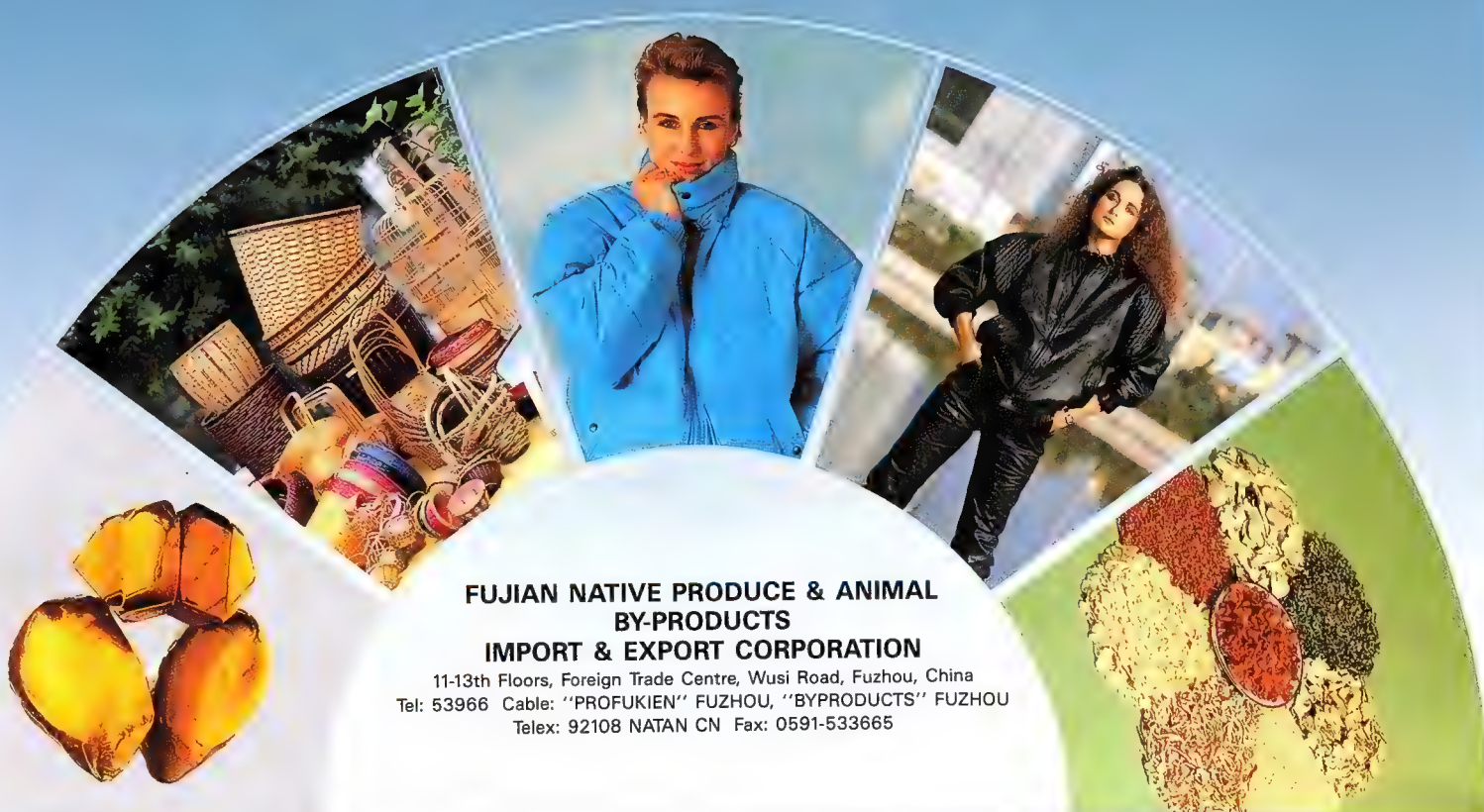
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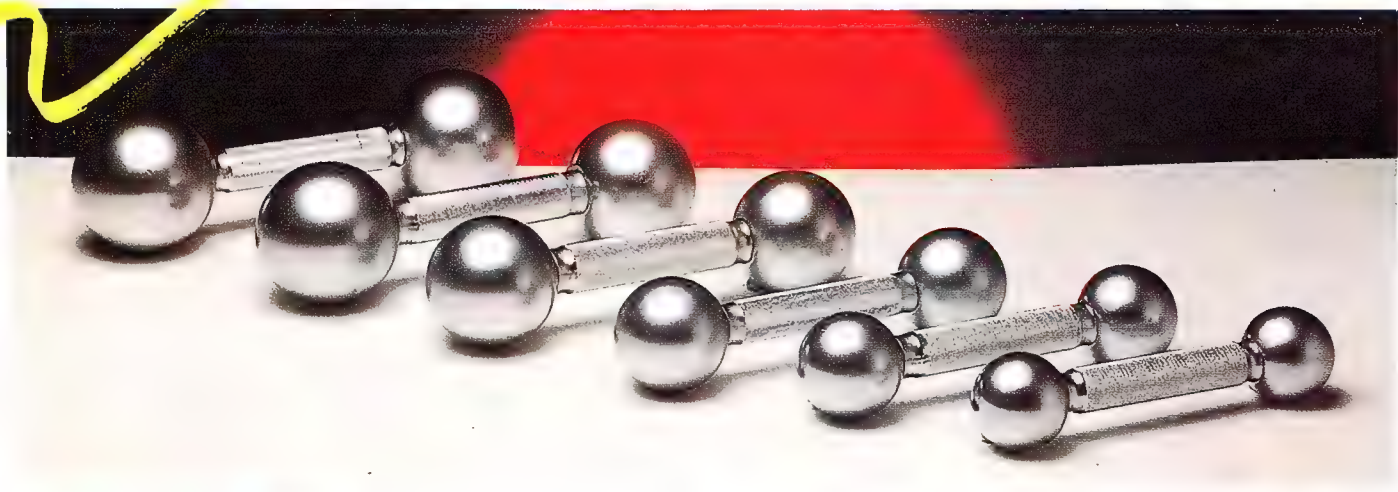
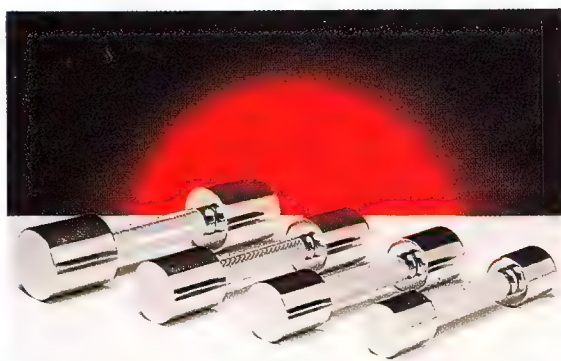
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PHOTOS BY WAN YAT SHA



**S**henwumen, the Gate of Divine Military Genius, northern entrance to Beijing's Forbidden City, towers massive and impregnable against the wind-swept winter sky. This is the 'back door' which leads out to Jingshan (Coal Hill) behind the vast imperial city within a city.





**T**he rays of the setting sun light the water obliquely and in such a way that the ancient stone dragon seems to spew out liquid gold. A moment of pure magic, captured at the Stele Forest in the Provincial Museum in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province.






# Wooden Ladle Art

PHOTOS BY ZHAO LI  
TEXT BY TIAN CUI



In southwestern China, on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, utensils in everyday use such as wooden ladles have evolved into what is practically an art form.

Traditionally, natural pigments — cinabar, indigo, red and yellow earths — were used to paint simple patterns on to an extra-large ladle which was then hung at the main entrance to a house to repel evil spirits.

The ladle designs featured here, exhibits in Beijing's National Art Gallery, are more sophisticated interpretations made from natural materials on a basis of wood. Some of them portray traditional themes such as the dragon boat race (top right), others form frightening masks or guardian figures (above and far right). One even incorporates the popular drinking horn of the southwest (bottom left). 











# The Child Kong Rong

DRAWINGS BY HAN NING ■ TEXT BY LIU TIANMING

**K**ong Rong (153-208), a brilliant writer of the Eastern Han, was a native of Qufu in Shandong Province. Qufu of course is famous as the birthplace of Kong Qiu, Confucius (551-479 B.C.).

The following are two of the many stories popularly told about Kong Rong as a child, illustrating his modesty, yet keen sense of irony — qualities for which his prose was later noted.

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
One hot summer's morning in the year 157, the villagers of Kongjiazhuang were returning home. Among them was Kong Rong's father. It was the pear season, and the front of his tunic was stuffed with fruit for his large family.

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Kong Rong, his sixth child, called the rest of the children together. No sooner had their mother said 'Everybody take one!' than the fifth child grabbed the biggest pear, while the baby of the family, a toddler, took the second biggest.

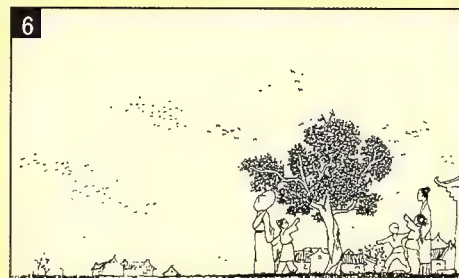
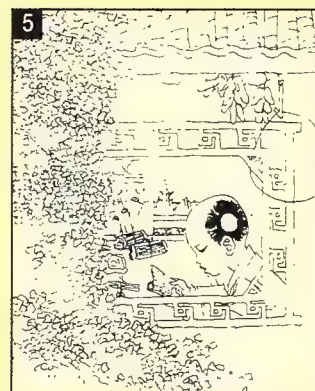
3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Then it was Kong Rong's turn. He chose carefully and took the smallest pear. His oldest brother wished aloud that all the rest were like Kong Rong — then he would have a chance at the biggest pear himself!

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Their father lifted Kong Rong on to his knee and said: 'And it was you who took the smallest last time I brought home some pears'. Kong Rong whispered shyly: 'Big pears are for the older ones. I'm still only little, so I should take a little pear.'

5 \_\_\_\_\_  
All his older relatives marvelled at the maturity and modesty of this four-year-old. 'He will carry on our ancestor's good name,' they declared. Kong Rong was also very fond of reading from an early age and already knew by heart such classics as the *Book of Odes*, *Elegies of Chu* and *Zuo Qiuming's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*.

6 \_\_\_\_\_  
Five or six years later, Kong Rong's father had to go to the capital Luoyang on business. Kong Rong begged to be allowed to go with him, pointing out that Sima Qian (the famous historian who lived c. 145-90 B.C.) had travelled widely. His mother backed him up, so his father eventually gave in.

7 \_\_\_\_\_  
Walking through the streets of Luoyang, Kong Rong frequently heard favourable mention of a certain Li Ying as an upstanding and scholarly official. He decided he would like to meet this Li.







8

So one day, while his father was out, Kong Rong asked around until he found his way to Li's residence. The guards refused to admit a mere child but Kong said boldly: 'I'm his friend. He'll know me when he sees me.' And, in the end, they relented.

9

Li was very surprised to have this unknown child ushered into his presence, but Kong told him: 'We are friends.'

10

He continued: 'Your family name is Li, so the philosopher Li Dan (Laozi) is your ancestor, right? And I am Kong Rong, a descendant of Kong Qiu (Confucius). As those two were friends as well as colleagues, surely we are linked in friendship through the generations?' Li had to agree and smiled at his ingenuity.

11

Kong continued: 'I heard that you are learned and just, so I wanted to meet you.' Li felt that this was no ordinary child and treated him as he would an honoured adult guest. They talked about history, geography, in fact everything under the sun.

12

A friend of Li, Chen Wei, another official, was announced. Li told him that he was entertaining a child of such intelligence that he was bound to become a fine writer and poet. Chen Wei (who was rather arrogant and conceited) took one look and said coldly: 'A bright child may not necessarily grow up to be a person of substance!'

13

Overhearing this, Kong Rong approached and was told that Chen was a talented person, famous for his poetry. Kong commented: 'I can see that Mr Chen must be an outstanding person.' As Chen smirked, Kong continued: 'Since a bright child doesn't necessarily grow up to be an intelligent adult, Mr Chen, who is so talented now, was probably not very smart when he was a child.'

14

All those present had a great deal of difficulty in hiding their mirth, and Chen Wei was most embarrassed. He had hardly expected such irony — and such skill in repartee — from one so young.

15

Knowing he had made Chen Wei lose face, Kong apologized to Li as he took his leave. 'I'm only a country boy and I shouldn't have answered back like that. Please forgive me!' But Li assured him that his visit had been most rewarding. And, of course, this story was soon told far and wide.

C

Reproduced from *The Child Kong Rong*, published by Anhui Fine Arts Publishing House



# SNUFF BOTTLES



**A** novella written by Deng Youmei in 1983, *Snuff-Bottles* conjures up the atmosphere of old Beijing at the turn of the century towards the end of the Qing dynasty.

The story revolves around the making of snuff-bottles and, in particular, snuff-bottles with 'interior painting'. Wu Shibao, a Manchu White Bannerman whose forbears were all military men, is an affable and rather timid man living on a comfortable inheritance. His fortunes take a turn for the worse when he is thrown into prison on suspicion of being a Boxer. But there he makes the acquaintance of Nie Xiaoxuan, a skilled potter and painter of snuff-bottles. Wu tries his own hand at this and shows considerable natural talent. Later, down and out after his release, he paints a few snuff-bottles and is astonished by how much money he can make in this way. He ropes in an old friend, Shou Ming, a curio-dealer, to help him sell his work.

In this extract (chapters 14 and 15), Wu has decided to search out Nie and learn more about his techniques. Eventually he marries Nie's strong-charactered daughter, Willow, and makes a living from *guyuxuan*\* and traditional-style snuff-bottles which he carefully inscribes 'Made in the Qianlong Reign' (in other words, between 1735 and 1796)!

Deng Youmei was born in 1931 in Pingyuan County, Shandong Province. His interest in the Manchus dates from when, as a child, he lived in Tianjin in the same compound as the concubine of a Manchu noble.

He started writing in 1951, winning an award in 1957 with his story *On the Cliff*. In 1962 he went to northeastern China where he worked in a factory, sharing quarters with a Manchu for six years. From this man he learned a great deal about old Beijing and Manchu life there.

\**Guyuxuan* is porcelain in the style known as *famille verte*.

14

The liveliest places outside Chongwen Gate were north of Pottery Market and west of Garlic Market. Since the Ming dynasty, Fourth Lane in Flower Market was the centre for wig-makers, jewellers and traders in artificial flowers and wax fruit. East Little Market specialized in daily necessities and local products. Craftsmen, pedlars, chairbearers and porters lived here, but few rich shopkeepers or celebrated actors and courtesans of the type found west of Qianmen. The dark, cramped houses, built of broken bricks with grey plaster roofs, were so squat that you had to stoop to enter. East and south of Rope Market were several temples which specialized in storing coffins until it was time for their burial. Five Tiger Temple and the King of Hell Temple were so dreaded for the coffins on their verandahs that even the most curious sightseers kept away. Inside Zuo'an Gate was posted a garrison of intrepid bannermen. People were afraid of them because they pounced on anyone who did wrong and made him carry water — most Beijing wells were brackish, and sweet water had to be fetched from some distance away. So Beijingers thought this southwest corner a dangerous part of town. Whenever possible they steered clear of it.

When Shou Ming and Wu Shibao went out they found an unusual commotion in the streets. In Pottery Market and Garlic Market platforms of pine and matting were being put up. Both sides of East Little Market Street were lined with stalls selling incense, candles, paper effigies, imitation silver ingots, lotus lanterns and other offerings. At the gate of Fahua Temple was a Buddhist boat more than thirty feet long with a dragon prow and phoenix-tail stern, its cabins and upper deck thronged with dragon children, arhats and warrior attendants — a lovely piece of work. Wu realized that today was the thirteenth of the seventh month, when laity and monks alike prayed to Buddha to save the spirits of the dead from suffering. Each temple had its own distinctive rites, and everyone enjoyed this festival. So nobles, high officials and their ladies came out from town in their carriages to watch. Early as it was, the place was already packed. Shou Ming and Wu tried to push their way through the crowd, but were caught up and swept towards Sunset Temple. Shou Ming learned that when the imperialists had attacked Beijing there had been a battle here. For two days soldiers, civilians, old and young had joined in the fighting and killed a score of Germans. After the devils entered Beijing, they took reprisals by carrying out a three-day massacre. So at this festival each local household contributed a pint of rice to release the souls of the slain from purgatory. And even the monks performed their rites without collecting alms.

After an hour or so Shou Ming and Wu squeezed through to Five Tiger Temple and asked

the way to Nie's house. Coming to a small gate painted black they knocked on it and called, "Is anyone at home?" A man's voice answered them. The door was opened, and out came Nie Xiaoxuan. He was wearing a grey cotton jacket, white trousers bound at the ankles, white socks and slippers. His newly shaved temples and plaited queue seemed to have taken ten years off his age.

Without giving Wu a chance to speak he said, "I've been making inquiries about you ever since I came home. Why didn't you come before?"

Wu apologized, "I couldn't help it. I had no money. I came just as soon as I got hold of some silver."

He introduced Shou Ming, who greeted Nie most respectfully. Then they went into the courtyard.

In this single-family compound only the south and west wings remained. The main rooms had been burned down and one of the two date trees had been scorched. The yard was neat and orderly with not a weed to be seen. Nie took his guests into the south room. Over the table opposite the door hung the portrait of an old lady in a red gown and pearl-stuffed cap. On the table were four plates of offerings.

"Is this your wife, master?" asked Wu.

Nie nodded.

At once Wu straightened his clothes and knelt to kowtow. Shou Ming would have done the same but Nie promptly stopped him.

"How long ago did the old lady die?" Shou Ming asked.

Nie told them that when the allied army came most people, including his daughter and himself, had gone to help the troops defend Zuo'an Gate, leaving the old lady paralysed in bed. After entering the city the German soldiers killed everyone they could find. As the way home was cut and his daughter Willow was young, Nie had taken her to hide in the reeds north of Xingong Village. On the third day when they went home, half their lane was burning. By the time they and the neighbours put out the fire, their roof had fallen in and the old lady had been dead for hours. Since her face was charred out of all recognition, he had painted this portrait from memory.

"I couldn't lay her out decently," he said. "So I painted her dressed like a noble lady." He gave a bitter laugh.

Not wanting to upset him Shou Ming changed the subject. "Is your daughter at home?" he asked.

"She's gone to Sunset Temple to burn incense and pray for her mother."

Wu asked, "When did you come out, master?"

As Nie related his adventures his face cleared. He described rather sheepishly his horror at Ninth Master's threat, but laughed heartily over the order for another set of snuff-bottles. Just then there came two knocks and a crisp girl's voice called, "Dad, I've bought some wormwood."





Shou Ming and Wu stood up while Nie raised the bamboo door curtain crying, "Come in and meet our guests. Master Wu and Master Shou are here!"

Willow assented. Having put the wormwood and succulent lotus root she had bought in the west room, she tidied her clothes and came back to curtsy to the strangers.

"As soon as Dad came home he asked if Master Wu had been, and here you are. Sit down, Master Shou! Why, what is my old man thinking of? On a hot day like this you must be parched, and he hasn't brewed any tea! I'll go and do it." After rattling this off she went out with a big stoneware pot.

Wu had the impression that a radiant, scented figure had flashed through the room like a gust of wind, so that he was struck dumb and could hardly look at her. When she came back he sized her up. What he saw took his breath away, and he lowered his head. How could a humble family like this have such a beautiful daughter?

She was about twenty. In mourning for her mother she was simply yet tastefully dressed in a white tunic, white skirt and white brocade slippers embroidered with narcissus. She had bracelets and ear-rings of silver and tied her hair in plaits with blue silk yarn. She was so indescribably lovely that Wu felt bowled over. Her charm lay in her grace, her poise and radiant health, owing nothing either to coquetry or cosmetics. As both Manchus and Hans lived here the Hans had been influenced by certain Manchu ways, so that few girls bound their feet. And Willow had worked since her childhood. She was like a lotus springing up from a pool.

When Willow had poured them tea she sat on a porcelain stool at one side. "We've been thinking of you, Master Wu. Are all your family well?"

Nie exclaimed, "Of course. I forgot to ask, just talking about myself."

Wu told them, sighing, of his family's troubles, and Shou Ming helped filled in the gaps. Nie could hardly believe his ears. "So you never even saw your wife's body?" he asked. "And you still haven't seen your son? Your family broken up!"

Wu nodded. Nie asked, "In that case are you living with your uncle?"

Shou Ming told him, "His father and uncle never hit it off. Went their separate ways. Master Wu is staying now in the Du Inn in Pottery Market."

When Willow heard that the little boy had been taken away by his nanny, the rims of her eyes reddened. When she heard of the house being burned down she wiped away tears. And now she started sobbing.

Wu said, "Don't let it upset you. I'm doing all right, I enjoy painting snuff-bottles." But he also wiped his eyes.

Willow said, "A grown man can take it. It's your little boy I'm sorry for. When Dad was in prison

I learned how hard it is to be an orphan, and he's such a little fellow!" She wept even more at the memory of her wretchedness, while Nie kept quiet.

Presently Shou Ming asked, "Are you busy now, Master Nie, working for Ninth Master?"

"I am indeed," replied Nie. "He wants me to fire bottles first as samples. I know where to get the materials, but I'm short of cash. In our trade the customer always pays in advance. This is the first time I've been asked to produce samples first."

Wu offered him two silver ingots. "Take this to be going on with. I brought it for Sister Willow."

Nie declined. "You're just out and must be short. If I were still behind bars that would have been different, but we can't impose on you."

Wu told him Bao's message and how he had sent silver.

Nie sighed, "Poor warm-hearted fellow, coming to such a bad end. You keep that silver. I asked him to give you that message. Now we can work together."

Wu was about to talk of Bao's execution, but Shou Ming stopped him by winking at him.

Then Nie asked, "Why not give up interior paintings and paint Guyuexuan with me instead?"

"You were afraid you'd have no chance to find an apprentice," answered Wu. "That's why you taught me your skill. Because of our friendship I agreed to set your mind at rest. Now you're home again you can make a careful choice of a successor. I've no right to horn in on your family craft. If you'd given me a sum of silver in prison so that if things came to the worst I could look after your daughter, now that you're back, of course I should return it..."

Shou Ming cut him short by treading on his foot and throwing him a warning glance. Then he noticed that Nie had turned his head away while Willow was glaring at him.

Shou Ming asked, "Have you no sense? Other people kowtow, send gifts and plead to be taken on, but Master Nie won't have them. You, though, you drag your feet. Go on, while I'm here as witness, kneel down and kowtow three times formally to your master!"

Shou Ming made him do this. And Nie bowed three times in return with a smile. When Wu rose to his feet Willow curtsied to him and greeted him spontaneously as "Elder Brother!"

Tactful Shou Ming hastily took out the two snuff-bottles he had not yet sold, and handed them to Wu. "Since this is so sudden, take these as your gift to your master."

Wu offered the bottles in both hands to Nie, who said, "Today is a festival, an auspicious day, and we've several things to celebrate. Prepare the meal, daughter, and we'll drink a few cups to drown the past years' bad luck."

While Willow fixed a meal, Wu trimmed the wormwood she had put in the yard, cut out some yellow joss sticks, and placed them among the

leaves. Then he fetched two chairs and tied the wormwood stalks to their backs to make star lanterns. Shou Ming, entering into the spirit of the thing, went out to buy fresh lotus leaves, stuck little candles on them, then fixed them up on the trellis in the yard. As soon as darkness fell they heard Buddhist drums and the chanting of sutras. Children holding lotus leaves on long stems, with candles in hollowed-out lotus pods and water-melons, marched along singing and dancing. A bright moon cast its radiance all around, making the whole city a scene of rejoicing, so that everyone forgot that they were speeding the spirits of the dead on their way to the nether region.

With the candles on the lotus leaves and hundreds of incense sticks on the wormwood stalks, Nie's courtyard seemed sprinkled with stars. He made his daughter set the little table in the middle of the yard, and the four of them sat round to drink on low stools and hassocks. Nie invited Wu to move in with them to learn how to paint Guyuexuan.

Willow said, "Your inn can't be very clean, Elder Brother, you'd better move in with us. I'll clear out the east room for myself, and you can stay in the west."

Wu would have declined but once again Shou Ming stopped him, saying, "Master and apprentice are like father and son. This an excellent plan."

Both Shou Ming and Wu drank heartily that evening. When they left, Shou Ming nudged Wu. "Now your troubles are over — all's turned out for the best. That's a lovely girl. If you're interested I'll act as middleman."

Wu answered tipsily, "Nonsense. We bannermen have a rule, Manchus and Hans can't marry."

"Rubbish. Didn't Emperor Qian Long take Iparhan as one of his wives? An honest-to-goodness Muslim from the Western Region!"

## 15

Wu Shibao never took the initiative, but given a lead he could follow. All his earlier enthusiasm for singing and interior painting was now transferred to painting Guyuexuan. It seemed to be magic the way Nie applied black or blue enamel, which after firing produced red blossoms and green leaves. Not only that, sometimes the glaze expanded or contracted. Small wonder that so many potters tried in vain to reproduce the technique. Wu gave himself whole-heartedly to learning, with Nie and his daughter to help him. Nie prepared the sketches and taught him to use enamel while Willow brought soup and water and did his washing and mending. One day she would make him a tunic, another a new pair of pants; every five days she urged him to have a bath, and twice a month to shave his temples. Shou Ming when he called found his friend a new man — plump, dapper and cheerful. Nie too was in good spirits now that he





was out of prison, had found an apprentice and received a big order. He looked thoroughly content. As for Willow, no longer lonely, reunited with her father, she was happy cosseting her "elder brother". Shou Ming sensed the contentment of their little household. Wu's arrival had added a new zest to their life.

The first task Nie gave Wu was painting a saucer. When Wu had completed the outline Shou Ming asked Nie, "Won't it soon be ready?"

"You may be a curio-dealer, but you don't know the first thing about Guyuexuan. I'll get my daughter to show you her kiln."

With a smile Willow led him to the north room, the roof of which had been destroyed in the fire. In the middle of the well-swept floor stood a brick furnace the size of a large water vat.

"What's this?" asked Shou Ming.

"The kiln."

Shou Ming took a careful look. "You fire Guyuexuan in such a small kiln?" he asked incredulously.

"This is how our family has always done it. We keep it secret. I've only shown you because you're my brother's good friend. You mustn't give us away to anyone."

"Well I'll be blowed!" he muttered.

All porcelain had to be fired. Fastidious families had whole sets from lotus tubs to condiment saucers and wine cups painted with the same design and fired in the same kiln. Connoisseurs could distinguish easily between Ru, Ge, Jun and Ding wares, but it took discrimination to tell which of the same wares came from the same kiln. Guyuexuan, though relatively new, had puzzled many porcelain experts. No one had seen a whole set, or any piece more than half a foot high. Most were single bowls, cups or saucers. So Nie's set of eighteen snuff-bottles was unique.

"Do you mean to say," Shou Ming asked, "that Master Nie's eighteen bottles were fired eighteen different times?"

"Not eighteen, eighty-eight more likely," Willow told him.

"How could that be?"

"The enamels in Guyuexuan change colour during firing. Each needs a different heat, and a different heat for light or dark shades of the same enamel. A leaf needs one heat for the surface, another for the underside, yet another for the veins. Figure it out, how many times would you have to fire a bottle with twelve colours?"

"So that's how it is!"

"That's not all by any means. One moment's carelessness and your ware will be spoiled. You may only get two good pieces out of ten. So if you count in the rejects, think how many firings it takes for one bottle."

"No wonder a snuff-bottle often costs over a thousand. I'd always thought potters must be richer than princes."

"Other potters maybe, but we're always in debt."

"As bad as that?"

"Craftsmen have no steady income. An order takes several months to carry out, and to buy material, charcoal, food and the rest we have to borrow. When we've sold our wares and paid our bills, how much is left? If we're paid in advance we haven't much in hand by the time we deliver the goods. Not to say we can't work every day in the year."

"Every trade has its drawbacks, that's true."

"There's no profit in Guyuexuan; my dad and I live on our interior paintings. From time to time we fire a few, partly so as not to allow this art to die out and let down our ancestors. Partly because we enjoy it, just as you and Brother can't do without singing. So sometimes we don't mind losing money on it. No matter how tiring or nerve-racking it is, producing a splendid, dazzling piece is a thrill that money won't buy!"

Shou Ming, struck by her reasoning and sure that she must be highly skilled, felt keener than ever to fix up a match between her and Wu Shibao. When Nie saw him out that evening, he broached the subject.

Nie said, "At first I had no choice but to teach Master Wu. I could see he had the makings of a fine craftsman. Though he's led a soft life he's keen to learn and a decent sort — not a wastrel who spends his time drinking, gambling and whoring. But our family has never married officials. Besides, he's a bannerman."

Shou Ming replied, "In prison he was struck off their register. And what if he were a bannerman? I'm one, that doesn't stop us from being friends, does it?"

"Don't get me wrong," said Nie. "We have Manchu and Han Chinese living here and we all get on fine. What I mean is, though now Master Wu is down on his luck, will he be content to go on like this instead of trying for a better job?"

"Aren't you getting mixed up? Bannermen have come down in the world. How many of your neighbours are really military officers? They've an allowance of rice twice a year and four taels of silver a month. Issued late and not paid in full. Wu Shibao likes to boast — that's a weakness we bannermen have. In fact he's talking about his grandfather's time. He's never had even the smallest post. When Prince Duan offered him one, he didn't take it; that's why he was in prison for over a year."

Nie liked the proposal and agreed to it. He told Shou Ming, "Let me sound my daughter out!"

That evening when Wu had gone for a stroll, Nie called Willow over and said, "What worried me most in prison was that I hadn't fixed up your marriage for you, or taught anyone to carry on my skill. Now Heaven has sent us Master Wu. Let's stick to our forbears' rules, accepting an apprentice and choosing a son-in-law at the same time. What do you say? Don't be shy. Are you willing or not?"

"Well!" declared Willow. "A spell in prison has made my old man see sense! But it's too late. You

should have asked me before Master Wu moved in. Now we're eating at the same table and working side by side. If I refuse, how can you climb down? And think of the talk there'd be!"

But though Willow was frowning her lips had curled up. "If you're really against it I won't insist," said Nie. "I've already told people that he's my apprentice. I can say it's inconvenient living together and have him move to that inn."

"If I were to refuse to cooperate with him, he'd have no one to fire his paintings and then what use would he be to you as an apprentice? But why wait till now to ask me?"

"You're right, but it didn't occur to me. And who was it suggested he should move in here?"

They were talking and laughing when Wu Shibao came back. At once they dropped the subject. Willow went to the kitchen to heat water while Wu went into the south room to join Nie. The latter noticed that he seemed upset. There were tear stains on his cheeks. He urged him, "Tell me frankly, where have you been?"

Wu muttered, "To call on my uncle."

"Tell him you've become my apprentice?"

"No. I told him I mean to make a living by painting snuff-bottles."

"Did he disapprove?"

"Said I'd been struck off the register and cut myself off from the Wu family. He's through with me. I'm not to call myself a bannerman, and I must change my name." He hung his head, the picture of despair.

Just then the door curtain flapped and in darted Willow. Arms akimbo, half jokingly and half angrily she wagged a finger at Wu. "A man should have some self-respect!" she cried. "When your home broke up he didn't ask after you, yet now you go and seek him out! And after being snubbed you come back here to whine. He's on a higher level, I suppose!"

"Don't scold, Willow," said her father, "Blood is thicker than water. It's natural for him to love bannermen. Do you feel it's beneath you, Shibao, making a living this way? Don't you want to stay here with us?"

"If I ever change my mind about that, may Heaven strike me dead!"

"Fine," said Nie. "Then you must look on this as your home."

Wu knelt down. "You're like a father to me, master. I'll be your son."

Willow laughed. "Wait a bit. I make up half this house. Why don't you ask me if I agree or not?"

"You're not going to turn me away, are you, sister?"

"That depends. I shall have to see if you have guts."

C

Translated by Gladys Yang

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# The

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# Older

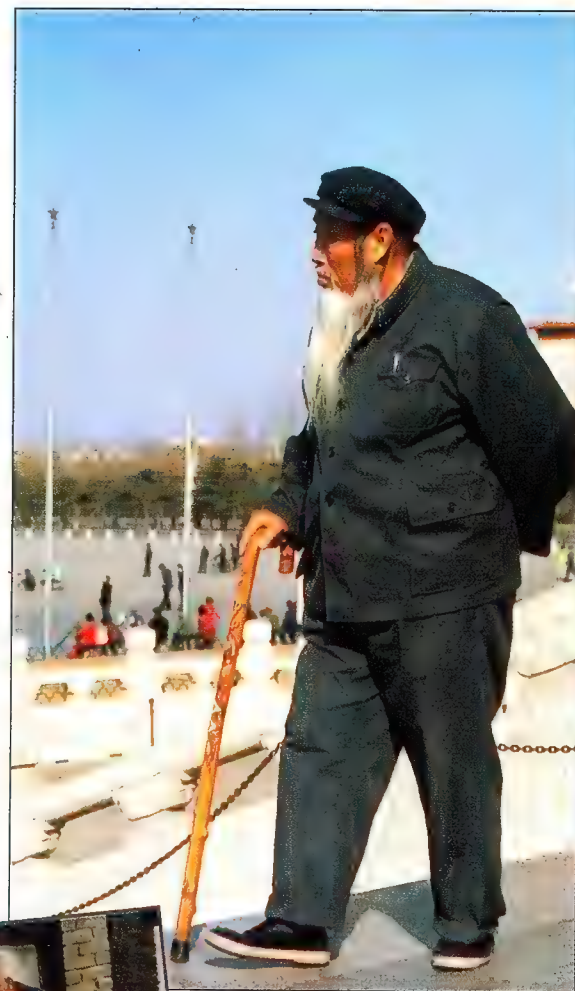
HELMUT HECKMANN

# Generation

Seen in Chongqing, Sichuan.  
Nothing on earth could  
shake their total absorption  
in their game, hour after  
hour.



A pensioner strolls  
at his ease through  
Tian'anmen Square  
in the heart of  
Beijing, pondering  
on friends long  
gone, places once  
seen, at home with  
his memories.



Having disposed of his fruit  
and vegetables at market in  
Guangzhou, Guangdong  
Province, a farmer enjoys a  
no doubt well-deserved nap  
for an hour ... or two.







## Shanhaiguan Adventure

It was 3 a.m., a chill in the air, the huge steaming train a warm haven. "What," I thought, as I was jostled away from it in a great crowd down a bleak platform, "what in the hell am I doing here?"

Minutes later Lisa, my companion, and I found ourselves literally locked in what was little more than a large box on the back of a three-wheel truck. There was a tiny window through which I could glimpse buildings rushing by as we were being bounced along we knew not where.

"Taxi?" the eager man had asked at the station. "Hotel" was all we could mumble in reply as he shoved us and our bags into this dark miniscule place. "Well," I shouted cheerfully to Lisa above the racket of the engine, "at least we've made it."

Within minutes, somewhat to our surprise, we were in a very pleasant room, within minutes in bed and asleep again. Why, when we woke up next morning it could all have been a dream.

I felt not a little pleased as I gazed out of the window onto a busy sun-filled street. Here we were, both in one piece, in Shanhaiguan, Hebei Province, China, where the Dragon's Head of the Great Wall meets the sea. We had, at last, got somewhere.

This was a Sunday. The previous Friday we had left our university in Beijing, where we were both teachers, at the start of a four-day holiday. We were going by air to the sub-tropical city of Xiamen in the far south. Everyone had told us how beautiful it was — narrow winding streets, pink and white houses, "always buy the small pineapples, they're the best," fantastic sea food and "don't forget your swimming costumes — the beaches are marvellous".

I think you could say we were really looking forward to it. But after twenty-one hours at Beijing Airport our enthusiasm had begun to dim.

It had seemed quite funny the first few times we tried to find out what was happening. All we ever got was "flight delayed", with a blank refusal to give us any idea how long our ordeal might last. By ten o'clock Saturday morning we had had enough.

It had been fun for a while, translating poetry, gazing at a party of American tourists so like a caricature of themselves it was impossible to accept they were real, talking to a German-speaking professor, finding the hidden and very comfortable restaurant, watching every plane in the world come and go except ours.

"Let's get a train to Shanhaiguan," said Lisa. "Right," said I, having no idea of the place she was talking about but knowing trains in China tend to run on time. I also had an uneasy sense of our so-short holiday slipping away.

It's a very funny feeling, leaving a major international airport by taxi after so many hours having been precisely nowhere. It explains the sense of triumph we felt as we flopped onto our soft sleepers at eight o'clock that night and felt the train move, actually move, away from Beijing.

It also explains why we were out from our hotel so quickly the next day, striding along the top of the Great Wall as if our lives depended on it. I have to tell you the wall is not so great in places — little more than a series of collapsing mounds with a track along the top. But at great risk to life and limb we walked it to the sea.

There it has been rebuilt to a state of suitable majesty — very imposing. But the sea and the beach impressed me more, so peaceful and calm in the dusk.

What followed, by way of contrast, was the most exciting switchback ride in all my life. Walking along a road in almost total darkness, we came upon a van the driver of which offered to take us the mile or so back to town. We were very glad to accept — at a cost of ten yuan.

It was worth every fen. Swinging through those narrow, twisting lanes at breakneck speed in the dark, the lights revealing houses, trees, just a finger-tip away; running over a pitted surface that flung the vehicle left and right in a totally crazy manner; glimpsing hens, sheep, even people jumping out of the way; scraping by a tractor, looming over ditches that could swallow us — oh, it was great.

Hanging on for dear life, I once glanced at the driver as he was caught in the lights from an oncoming vehicle. There was a grin of all-consuming pleasure on his face — quite mad of course. And it tends to be infectious, that sort of thing. Lisa later dismembered a plateful of crabs with much the same relish.

The following day I found a tiny coffee bar in a street of one-room restaurants. All over the walls were cut-out posters of beautiful Western faces and places. But above all, there was coffee.

In all of Shanhaiguan, this is the only place you can find coffee in any form. I know because I looked. We had also both been looking for bicycles to hire. As it turned out, I found the coffee and Lisa found the bicycles.

Then we cycled back to the sea. There, on the far side of the Dragon's Head, was the local tourist beach. At the top of the cliff was a large parking area with shops and toilets; on the beach below, camels and horses for hire and crowds sitting on the sand, paddling, enjoying the sun.

Earlier we had found a quieter beach from which fishermen launched their larger wooden open boats. Watching a man standing on one of them out at sea, propelling it along exactly with a single large oar with a sort of twisting movement, was to wonder just how he did it. Like all natural skills, it looked so easy but I know for a fact I would have the boat going in circles — if I could lift the oar that is.

Inland we had watched a man and a woman thinning the blossoms on peach trees. You get bigger peaches that way, another man explained to us in sign language. They were very deft, using their fingers with practised art. Odd how it is, the sort of nostalgia you feel when you sense the purity of these simple, practical abilities. Somehow, you walk away with a feeling of loss.

I must say I took to Shanhaiguan. I don't think they see many Westerners there. At best it's a half-hour tour stop. Mostly it's a holiday place for Chinese people.

There is an area of small round-roofed houses with white painted walls. Through it run little lanes and walkways, some overhung with grape vines. It is all very swept and neat. I went into a little corner shop to buy chocolate. The elderly couple who ran it were obviously so happy to serve me, other customers grinning too. It was as if they felt honoured that I had given them my custom. I only wish I could have told them that the honour was mine.

The next morning, a Tuesday, we walked through the town to catch the 7.30 train back to Beijing. People, young and old, were out in the square disco-dancing in unison. The sun was shining, they were smiling, laughing together. Xiamen? Where's that? Give me Shanhaiguan every time.

**Michael Niblock**



## CAAC Flights to and from Dandong

Route	Days of Weeks	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Dandong	1 3	13:30	15:40	6606
Dandong — Beijing	1 3	10:05	12:30	6605
Changchun — Dandong	3 6	08:35	13:05	6643
Dandong — Changchun	1 5	10:30	14:10	6665
Dandong — Changchun	3 6	13:40	17:55	6644
Guangzhou — Dandong	6	14:20	18:10	6326
Dandong — Guangzhou	6	09:25	13:25	6325
Dandong — Dandong	3 6	12:05	13:05	6643
Dandong — Dalian	3 6	13:40	14:40	6644
Shenyang — Dandong	1 3	08:40	09:35	6605
Dandong — Shenyang	3 6	10:05	13:05	6643
Dandong — Shenyang	3 6	07:55	08:40	6609
Dandong — Shenyang	1 3	16:10	17:05	6606
Dandong — Shenyang	3 6	13:40	16:25	6644
Dandong — Shenyang	3 6	18:45	19:30	6610

(Valid in spring, 1989)

## Major Hotels in Liaoning

City/Prefecture	Name	Address	Telephone	Tariff (¥)		
				Single room	Double room	Suite
Dalian	Nanshan Hotel	56 Fenglin Street, Zhongshan District	238751		150	
	Dalian Guesthouse	4 Zhongshan Square	233111		170	
	Bangchui Island Hotel	Bangchui Island, Zhongshan District	235131		150	
	Dalian Hotel	6 Shanghai Road, Zhongshan District	233171		111	
	Furama Hotel Dalian	74 Stalin Road, Zhongshan District	230888		285	
	Dalian International Hotel	9 Stalin Road, Zhongshan District	238238		220	
	Jiuzhou Holiday Inn	18 Shengli Square, Zhongshan District	808888		210	
	Dalian Regent Hotel	12 Laohutan Street, Zhongshan District	282811		170	
	Minhang Building	143 Zhongshan Road, Xigang District	333111		150	
	Xiuri Hotel	Zhuanjiazhuang, Xigang District	282586		150	
Jinzhou Prefecture	Beishan Hotel	12 Beijing Road Section 3, Jinzhou	68177	98	98	130 195
	Hai'ou Hotel	182 Wenquan Street, Xinghai Road, Xingcheng	2549	126	68	126
	Mingcheng Hotel	Xinghai Road Section 2, Xingcheng	3646	126	68	126
	Lüshan Hotel	Guangning, Beizhen County	2590	120	60	120
Chaoyang	Chaoyang Hotel	Hongxing Road		80	50	150
	Yandu Hotel	Zhuanpan Street (northeast)		80	100	
	Chaoyang Building	Square in front of Chaoyang station		80	100	
Dandong	Dandong Hotel	Foot of Mt. Jinjiang		20 — 500		
	Yalujiang Building	City centre		20 — 150		
	Wenquan Hotel	Hot spring area in Wulongbei		20 — 100		
	Donggang Hotel	Near Dadonggang		20 — 100		





# CAAC Flights to and from Shenyang

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Shenyang	1 2 4	15:20	17:25	6164
	1 3 5	19:50	21:05	6114
	1 3 6	15:35	17:30	6146
	2 4 6	13:05	15:50	6182
	2 4 6	14:40	16:35	6162
	2 4 7	12:50	14:45	6150
	4 7	17:55	19:15	6108
	4 7	14:00	15:15	6102
	1 3	13:20	17:05	6606
	2 6	21:05	22:25	6106
Shenyang — Beijing	1 2 4	12:30	14:25	6163
	1 3 5	07:05	08:20	6113
	1 3 6	12:45	14:40	6145
	2 4 6	09:25	12:10	6181
	2 4 6	11:55	13:50	6161
	2 4 7	10:05	12:00	6149
	4 7	07:30	08:50	6107
	4 7	07:05	08:20	6101
	1 3	08:40	12:30	6605
	2 6	07:35	08:55	6105
Guangzhou — Shenyang	1 3 5	17:22	21:15	6302
	2 4 7	14:05	17:50	3601
	1 5	15:37	19:20	6308
	2 6	17:30	21:25	6312
	4 7	17:30	21:25	6304
Shenyang — Guangzhou	1 3 5	07:40	11:30	6301
	2 4 7	18:45	22:30	3602
	1 5	07:20	11:05	6307
	2 6	07:45	11:35	6311
	4 7	07:40	11:35	6303
Nanjing — Shenyang	4 7	18:55	20:50	6508
Shenyang — Nanjing	4 7	16:15	18:10	6507
Shanghai — Shenyang	1 3 5	18:25	20:30	6506
	2 4	08:00	10:10	5601
	6	18:15	20:20	6514
	7	18:20	20:30	6502
Shenyang — Shanghai	1 3 5	07:55	10:05	6505
	2 4	10:55	13:00	5602
	6	08:25	10:35	6513
	7	08:10	10:15	6503
Xi'an — Shenyang	3 7	18:05	20:55	6202
Shenyang — Xi'an	4	08:30	11:45	2601
Shenyang — Hong Kong	3 7	14:35	17:20	6201
	4	12:25	15:35	2602
Hong Kong — Shenyang	1 4	12:00	15:30	CA604
Shenyang — Hong Kong	1 4	07:30	11:10	CA603

(Valid in spring, 1989)

## Train Schedules Beijing — Shenyang — Changchun — Harbin

39 Exp.	27 Exp.	11 Exp.	Train Station	No.	12 Exp.	28 Exp.	40 Exp.
20:32	16:48	06:34	Beijing		20:08	10:00	06:32
22:15	18:31	08:16	Tianjin North		18:36	08:28	05:00
—	20:13	—	Tangshan		—	06:40	—
—	—	11:19	Baidalhe		15:28	—	—
01:53	22:21	12:05	Shanhaiguan		14:50	04:40	01:24
04:12	00:40	14:24	Jinzhou		12:25	02:15	22:59
07:22	03:45	17:15	Shenyang		09:30	23:23	20:00
—	05:18	—	Benxi		21:48	—	—
—	08:07	—	Dandong		18:53	—	—
11:30	—	—	Changchun		—	—	15:51
14:55	—	—	Harbin		—	—	12:24
19:04	—	—	Qiqihar		—	—	08:07

Exp. — Express

## Train Schedules Shenyang — Dalian

284 F.T.	232/229 F.T.	84/81 Exp.	92 Exp.	Train Station	No.	91 Exp.	83/82 Exp.	231/230 F.T.	283 F.T.
From Qiqihar	From Beijing	From Beijing					To Beijing	To Beijing	To Qiqihar
03:55	12:26	23:03	08:00	Shenyang		14:03	18:57	03:37	22:21
05:25	13:50	00:27	09:23	Anshan		12:43	17:30	02:13	20:52
06:58	15:03	01:33	10:29	Dashiqiao		11:43	16:30	01:05	19:43
10:46	18:52	05:10	13:45	Dalian		08:08	12:57	21:00	15:35

F.T. — Fast through passenger train  
Exp. — Express

# CAAC Flights to and from Dalian

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Dalian	1 3 5	18:05	19:10	6130
	1 3 5	13:50	15:00	6128
	2 4 6	19:40	20:45	6124
	2 4 7	20:10	21:20	6122
	2 7	09:15	10:25	CA951
Dalian — Beijing	1 3 5	16:15	17:20	6129
	1 3 5	07:00	08:05	6127
	2 4 6	19:15	20:20	6123
	2 4 7	16:00	17:05	6121
	3 7	20:55	22:10	CA952
Guangzhou — Dalian	2 4 7	16:45	17:50	6131
	1 3 5	07:50	11:05	3605
	1 3 5	12:00	15:15	6324
Dalian — Guangzhou	2 4 7	11:45	15:00	3606
	1 3 5	07:45	11:10	6323
	1 3 5	13:20	16:40	6321
Shanghai — Dalian	1 3 5	10:50	12:35	6522
	2 6	16:30	18:20	6524
Dalian — Shanghai	1 3 5	15:45	17:30	6521
	2 6	07:15	09:05	6523
Xi'an — Dalian	1	13:20	15:20	9603
Dalian — Xi'an	1	16:05	18:10	9604
Hong Kong — Dalian	3	12:10	15:40	CA602
Dalian — Hong Kong	3	07:35	11:20	CA601

(Valid in spring, 1989)

## Ferry Schedules to and from Dalian

Route	Nautical miles	Hours	Departure		Tariff (¥)		
			Dates	Time	First class	Second class	Third class
Dalian — Shanghai	558	37	One ferry in each direction every day	Dalian: 08:30 Shanghai: 20:30	127.50	95.90	49.50
Dalian — Yantai	89	8	Two ferries in each direction every day	Dalian: 20:00 Yantai: 20:00	Upper berth	—	38.70
				Yantai: 20:00 Dalian: 21:00	Lower berth	76.80	42.60
Dalian — Tianjin New Harbour	216	14	From Dalian: 2nd, 9th, 12th, 16th, 20th and 24th of each month From Tianjin New Harbour: 4th, 11th, 14th, 18th, 22nd and 26th of each month	Dalian: 15:00 Tianjin New Harbour: 15:00	Upper berth	—	52.20
					Lower berth	103.50	57.50
Dalian — Qingdao	274	26	From Dalian: 2nd, 8th, 14th, 18th, 22nd and 26th of each month From Qingdao: 4th, 10th, 16th, 20th, 24th and 28th of each month	Dalian: 19:00 Qingdao: 20:00	Upper berth	—	60.60
					Lower berth	120.20	66.80
Dalian — Guangzhou	1,348	100	From Dalian: 10th and 25th of each month From Guangzhou: 1st and 18th of each month	Dalian: 14:00 Guangzhou: 11:00	—	138.60	—



**Train Schedules**  
**Beijing — Jinzhou — Shenyang — Changchun — Harbin**

165 F.T.	151 F.T.	147/146 F.T.	139 F.T.	137 F.T.	59 Exp.	57/56 Exp.	Train Station	No.	58/55 Exp.	60 Exp.	138 F.T.	140 F.T.	148/145 F.T.	152 F.T.	166 F.T.
00:20	Tianjin Temporary Station	From Zhenru	Southern Beijing Station 01:13	08:35	15:50	From Shanghai	Beijing	To Shanghai	10:47	04:10	Southern Beijing Station 23:10	To Zhenru	Tianjin Temporary Station	21:45	
—	20:13	13:38	—	—	—	03:47	Tianjin West	10:36	—	—	—	11:43	13:27	—	
04:16	21:47	15:38	04:57	—	—	—	Tangshan	—	—	—	19:10	09:08	11:42	17:37	
—	—	17:55	07:00	14:42	20:01	07:17	Qinhuangdao	06:52	06:24	22:14	17:07	07:09	09:31	15:50	
06:40	00:15	18:25	07:32	15:15	20:31	07:47	Shanhaiguan	06:30	06:00	21:53	16:46	06:48	09:09	15:28	
—	—	19:16	08:40	16:09	—	—	Suizhong	—	—	—	15:42	05:34	08:03	14:24	
—	01:40	20:11	09:21	16:50	—	—	Xingcheng	—	—	20:16	15:02	04:43	07:23	13:40	
09:15	02:56	21:27	10:39	18:06	22:50	10:10	Jinzhou	04:05	03:35	19:09	13:55	03:22	06:16	12:15	
13:02	06:37	01:14	14:30	21:54	02:00	13:32	Shenyang	01:06	00:36	15:42	10:15	00:00	02:14	08:44	
18:14	11:44	05:29	19:19	02:42	06:17	17:59	Changchun	20:36	20:06	10:53	05:23	19:10	21:45	04:01	
22:40	15:37	—	23:14	06:17	—	21:56	Harbin	—	—	06:50	01:30	—	18:02	00:14	

F.T. — Fast through  
passenger train  
Exp. — Express

Blessed with mineral resources of many kinds — coal and iron ore, magnesium and petroleum — Liaoning Province nowadays is one of China's industrial heartlands. Nevertheless, the centre of the province, the Songliao Plain, produces a good yield of grains, fruits and vegetables and, with its vast forests, the province also has a lucrative timber industry as well as such products as sable and other furs and ginseng. Its population of over thirty-five million inhabits a territory of over 150,000 square kilometres, sixty percent of it mountainous. Well served by the railway network, Liaoning has one drawback for tourists — its cold winter!

### Shenyang

The cradle of the Manchus, becoming their third consecutive capital — Shengjing — in the seventeenth century, this was a nomad trading centre from around the eleventh century. When the Manchus conquered Beijing in 1644, Shenyang became a secondary capital known by its Manchu name, Mukden. It is now the provincial capital. The present-day industrial city, with a population of nearly three million, is a focal point for the railways in China's northeast. It is here that one finds the most important relics of the Manchus outside Beijing.

**Imperial Palace** Started by Nurhachi (1559-1626), the Manchu leader, this complex covering 60,000 square metres was completed essentially by his son, Huangtaiji (1592-1643), in 1636. Like Beijing's Forbidden City, it is now a museum.

The main ceremonial structure in the eastern part of the palace is the octagonal, double-roofed Dazheng Hall, in front of which are arranged as in a military encampment the ten square pavilions which formed the headquarters of the chieftains of the Eight Banners. These now display armour, swords and bows from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The heart of the complex consists of three halls raised high on terraces, one behind the other. These are Chongzheng Hall, where day-to-day affairs of state were dealt with and conferences held, Fenghuang Hall, the royal banqueting hall, and Qingning Palace, residential quarters for the emperor and his concubines. Each



Photo by Wang Yi

of the courtyards of the latter contained a *suolun* pole for shamanistic rituals. Other buildings in the west of the compound were added later by Emperor Qianlong (reign dates 1735-1796).

**Fuling or Dongling (Eastern Mausoleum)** Set in a forest around ten kilometres northeast of Shenyang, this is where Nurhachi himself is buried. Construction of the mausoleum started in 1629, two and a half years after his death. Smaller than his son's mausoleum at Zhaoling, although set out in much the same way, it overlooks a river from a hilltop.

**Zhaoling or Beiling (Northern Mausoleum)** The burial place of Huangtaiji, who became Emperor Taizong, founder of the Qing dynasty, this is a much more imposing complex and took eight years to build. The tomb chamber is fronted by a pair of stone steeds representing the emperor's favourite warhorses. The compound is enclosed within sturdy walls and contains sundry halls and pavilions in addition to the

grassy tumulus of the actual tomb. The complex also contains over 4,000 ancient pines.

### Shenyang Steam Engine Museum

Exhibits at this museum include steam engines made in China, Japan, the United States, the Soviet Union, Germany, Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania, among others. The oldest was made in the United States in 1907. The heaviest is a Russian-made locomotive, fifty-six years old, which weighs 170 tons. The museum also contains the only existing Japanese engine (of a total of twelve ever made of this type) dating from 1934, which was employed on the run between Dalian and Changchun in the northeast and travelled at a speed of 130 kilometres per hour. Check with CITS for opening times.

### Liaoyang

Sixty kilometres south of Shenyang, Liaoyang was the second consecutive capital of the Manchus, when it was called Dongjing. The main places of interest to see now are the Baita (White Pagoda) dating from the Liao dynasty (916-1125) and scenic spots along the River Tanghe. The Tanghe Hot Spring is a rare radon spring; its waters are said to be highly effective in treating diseases of the heart and joints.

### Qianshan

Twenty-five kilometres or about an hour's bus ride east of Anshun (a heavily industrialized city which accounts for around 25% of China's iron and steel), the Qianshan or Qianlian (Thousand Lotus) Mountains hide a multitude of temples dating from the Tang, Ming and Qing dynasties. At the southern foot of the mountains, which cover an area of some forty square kilometres, is the Tangganzi Hot Spring where Puyi (1906-1967), last emperor of the Qing, is said to have bathed with his empresses. There is a sanatorium and hotel accommodation.



## Package Tours for Individuals

Individual travellers can now pre-book accommodation in China, while retaining the freedom to organize their own meals and sightseeing, through China Youth Travel Service. CYTS' main partner in Britain is Regent Holidays of Bristol.

## Capital Improvements

The Beijing tourism industry is investing millions of yuan this year in the effort to make overseas visitors more comfortable during their stay. CCTV and Beijing TV are to run adverts twice a day, and eight newspapers are to introduce special columns dealing with tours, food and hotels in the capital. Extra signs for foreigners will be put up in streets, parks and parking areas, and more brochures will be made available at tourist sites.

In addition, the 110,000 employees of the Beijing Tourism Administration are required to learn six basic sentences in six languages. Beijing received 1.2 million overseas visitors last year.

## Northern Chinese Tallest

There is a wide range in the average heights of people from different parts of China. But a recently concluded ten-year survey of twenty-four nationalities, including Han Chinese, has shown that those living in the north — in the valley of the Huanghe, the northern provinces and the north-west — are tallest, averaging 1.67 metres. Shortest are certain of the ethnic groups of the southwest with an average height of less than 1.59 metres. The survey covered 10,997 men and women in sixteen provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities.

## Ming Tomb Renovation

Zhaoling, one of the thirteen famous Ming tombs fifty kilometres northwest of Beijing, is currently under renovation. The best preserved of all the tombs, it will be open to the public from October 1989. Located at the foot of Dayu Hill, Zhaoling is the tomb of Zhuzai or Muzong (reign dates 1567-1572), the twelfth emperor of the Ming dynasty.

## A Novel Museum

A museum was recently inaugurated in honour of the much-loved Chinese classic *Journey to the West*, the work of Wu Cheng'en (c. 1500-1560) of the Ming dynasty.

The museum in the Changshan Garden, Zhengding, south-western Hebei Province, covers 2,000 square metres. It consists of three halls, each thirty metres long and twenty metres wide, which illustrate the story of the monk Xuan Zang and his disciples Monkey, Pigsy and Sandy in its entirety. Eighteen of the settings for the novel's most famous episodes are represented here, including the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, the Dragon King's palace in the Eastern Sea, and the mountain lair of the White-Bone Demon.

## Now Open

The relevant Chinese authorities have announced the opening of twenty-nine further cities and counties to foreigners armed with valid visas or residence permits.

In Anhui Province, these new open areas include the city of Xuanzhou and the counties of Qianshan, Susong, Tongcheng, Dongzhi, Zongyang, Guoyang, Mengcheng, Suxian, Xiaoxian, Tianchang, Qianjiang, Shouxiang, Shucheng, Lu'an, Hexian, Ningguo and Guangde.

Also affected this time is the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, where the towns of Yining, Bole, Altay, Karamay, Tacheng, Kuitun and Hotan and the counties of Huocheng, Shanshan, Toksun and Yecheng are now officially open.

## River Dolphin Reserve

It has been reported that the Hubei provincial authorities are planning to make the old Tian'ezhou (Swan Island) course of the River Yangtse into a nature reserve for the extinction-threatened Chinese river dolphin. The intention is to breed dolphins in an environment similar to their habitat, the Yangtse, but with the advantages of plentiful food resources and freedom from industrial pollution. Only about two hundred of the species are thought to exist in the world today, most of these in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtse.

## Archaeological Finds in the South

Fossils of a human jawbone believed to be 10,000 years old were recently discovered in a cave in Fujian Province in south-eastern China. Such finds from the Paleolithic are a first for Fujian.

Meanwhile, further to the southwest, on Hainan Island, archaeologists have unearthed more than a hundred stone artefacts and a number of bronze drums, bronze pots and porcelain from the Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) dynasties. A survey of the Xisha Islands conducted at the same time has revealed sites on Ganquan Island in the western part of the archipelago, pointing to Chinese activity in the area more than 1,000 years ago.

## Yunnan's Bronze Age Heritage

Around four hundred Bronze Age relics have been discovered in Songming County northeast of Kunming and Lake Dianchi in Yunnan Province. Made of bronze and jade, the identifiable articles include everyday tools, ornaments and weapons. Archaeologists can now state, following the excavation of rare looms, that textile-making flourished around Lake Dianchi during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), at which time the inhabitants practised agriculture, as evidenced by the find of sickles and other farm implements.

## CTS Lucky Draws

To celebrate the fortieth anniversary of CTS (China Travel Service) in this Year of the Snake, two lucky draws/competitions are to be held. For the first, tourists taking a CTS tour between May 1 and October 21 1989 will be entitled to a lucky draw ticket. The winner of the draw will be able to take a two-week free holiday to China in 1990, together with a companion. The second, a 'best cooperation' competition, is open to travel agencies which send more than 700 clients a year to China as well as to tourists who correctly complete a questionnaire, available in hotels and restaurants, while in China.

## Arts Festival for Beijing

China's Ministry of Culture has announced that Beijing will host the Second China Arts Festival from 15 September to 5 October 1989. Troupes from all over the world will participate, together with the best exponents of China's own performing arts, to coincide with celebrations marking the fortieth anniversary of the People's Republic. The Bolshoi Ballet, the Joffrey Ballet, the Hamburg Opera and artistes from the United States, Sweden and Korea have already accepted invitations.

## Guilin Improvements

A project is currently underway to dredge the River Lijiang at Guilin, one of China's top beauty spots, in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. At present visitors can only take a boat trip along the river to view the celebrated karst peaks during the spring, summer and autumn. The river level is too low during the winter. The dredging, in association with water supply projects, should ensure that the river is navigable all year round.

Calling for greater efforts to combat pollution, the Guilin municipal authorities have also closed or moved a number of factories and workshops which were persistent offenders or spoil the beauty of the environment, and planted more trees in the city.



### Wuxi's New Station

A famous scenic site and industrial city — famous for its silk — set by the banks of Lake Taihu in Jiangsu Province astride the Grand Canal, Wuxi is now better equipped to deal with its ever-growing numbers of visitors. The recently opened railway station covers 12,500 square metres and is five times the size of the old one.

### The Final Link

China's Grand Canal, the longest in the world, is now seven kilometres longer! This January the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, which has essentially been in position since the Sui dynasty (581-618) and is still very important for transporting cargo, was reconnected with the River Qiantang which empties into Hangzhou Bay in Zhejiang Province. The old channel was blocked by the build-up of silt and had been inoperable for centuries.

In addition to the new length of canal, a 300-tonnage shiplock has been constructed. The new channel has a device to dispose of silt within the lock, and constant dredging will be undertaken outside the lock. This link is expected to double transport capacity in the area and cut transportation costs by many million yuan a year.

### Bell Tower Open to Public

After several years of renovation work, Beijing's Bell Tower dating from the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) has now been reopened to the public. The tower is located at the northern end of Di'anmenwai Street in the northern part of the capital. Together with the nearby Drum Tower, it kept Beijingers informed of the passage of time over countless centuries. Twice destroyed by fire, the Bell Tower was rebuilt in brick during the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). It is 47.9 metres high. Its gigantic bell, cast during the Yongle reign (1403-1424) of the Ming dynasty, is 5.4 metres high and 27 centimetres thick, with a diameter of 3.4 metres. It is said that the bell could be heard over a radius of twenty kilometres.

N E X T  
I S S U E



### Qinghai Special

Mountains, hundreds of lakes, and high grassland plateaux at an average of over 4,000 metres above sea-level characterize this enormous, sparsely populated tract of territory to the northeast of Tibet:

- In Search of the Huanghe's Source
- Epitome of Tibetan Buddhism
- Three Festivals of Qinghai
- Qutan Monastery — A Jewel Unknown

Other major articles will include:

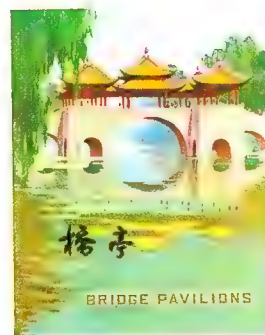
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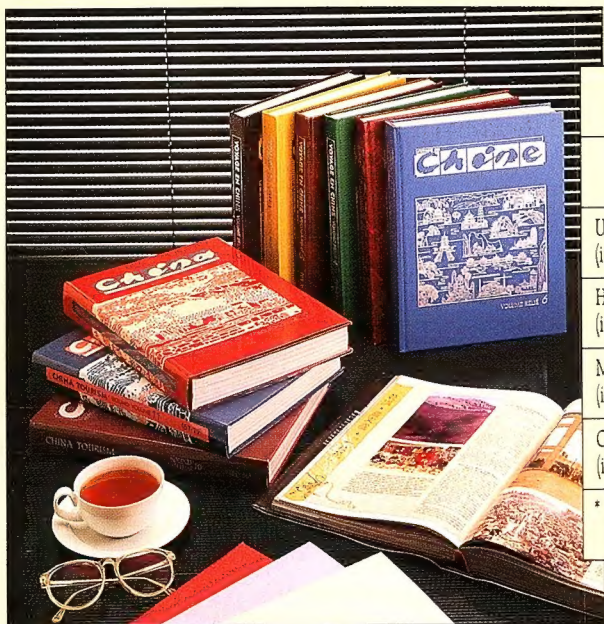
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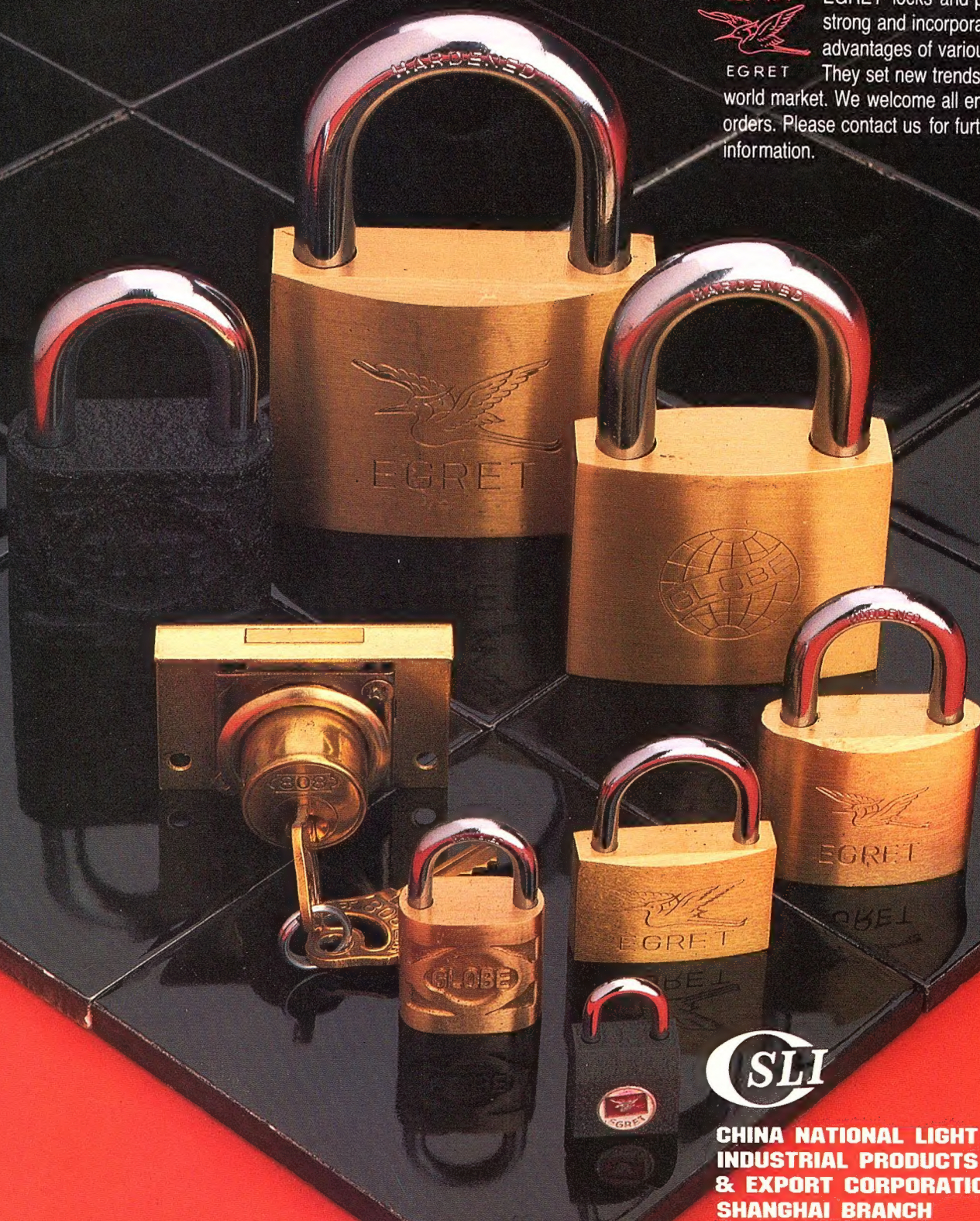
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